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No. 612. FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 22ND, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

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No. 612. ONE PENNY

For the Week Ending Sept. 22nd, 1900.

# A MODERN GALATEA.

My condition, at last, became alarming, and I was afraid of myself. The cause of it—ah, that was something. Had it been a matter which an honourable man might discuss with a friend, I could have had the healing consolation of sympathy; but at the very core of my affliction lay the obligation of silence. Let us suppose a case.

Once there was a very beautiful woman, married happily, and a mother. Her husband had a friend—a man of the world. This man discovered in his friend's wife an accumulation of all womanly graces; he saw in her the ideal woman in all the world, the only one he could have loved and courted, fought for and died for.

Yet she was wholly inaccessible, even in dreams. She was as good as she was beautiful, as true as she was winsome. Even had she not been so his hands were tied by loyalty to his friend. Some of you will laugh at that. Well, if a man's honour fails him in one direction, I will not trust it in another; for a man is a whole remainder after subtracting all his evil from all his good. But "the flesh is weak." That is the villain's only plea for mercy.

The friend could not conceal it from the wife. Could not? I must be careful in my choice of words. Is there anything in the line of right that a man cannot do in such a case? The world is wide—he could have gone away—but she was so beautiful and winsome. Nor, as he had not declared himself, could she presume to send him away?

He thought he saw in her eyes something of pity, something of warning, something of everything. The suffering wore him out.

But I must return to the beginning and resume my story.

I was much prostrated in mind and flesh, and the services of a skilful physician were imminently needed.

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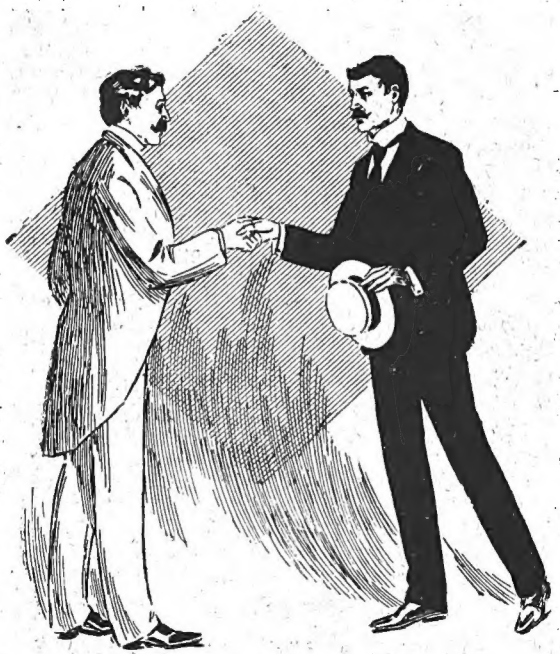
With that idea I went to see a famous man, Dr. Brownell, a specialist in matters of the nerves.

It may be thought a little peculiar that I went to consult this particular man; but it must be considered that besides being a very skilful physician, he was my



"Why, I am glad to see you," he said, taking my hand.

friend. There might have been certain reasons why I should not consult him, but we need not discuss them now. His wife was a beautiful woman, and I knew her well; but what in the world has this to do with my visit to her husband?

Brownell was a peculiar man. Though he was the best friend I ever had, there was not a very close intimacy between us, and yet I was nearer to him than was any other of his friends. He was much older than his wife.

A kind heart, given force and direction by great wealth, had been exercised by him on my behalf with so intelligent a purpose that I was become a man of a little importance in the community.

The physician lived in a fine old house of great size. Not all of it was occupied. He was a tireless collector of curiosities, and had expended a fortune in that pursuit. Few of these were ever shown to his friends, and he never spoke of them, but kept them in out-of-the-way places in the great establishment.

He was a reticent man, and many feared him; but I saw in him nothing but goodness, and a marvellous skill. So it was upon Doctor Brownell that I called formally as a patient.

His consulting rooms were on the first floor, and consisted of two rooms—a handsomely-fitted reception-room, and back of it one in which his patients were generally treated. Both were very large.

Al hough I had called and visited very often at his house, I had never been in these rooms before.

When I entered he was just ready to go out, but he welcomed me with his old-time cordiality.

"Why, I am glad to see you," he said, taking my hand. "Come in and rest awhile. You surely haven't come to see me professionally?"

He looked closely at me as he asked the question.

"Yes," I replied; "I fear I am in rather a bad way."

His face showed much concern.

"You do look a little shaken," said he, removing one of his gloves.

Then he began in a deliberate fashion to make a scientific inquiry into my case.

While he was occupied thus, a messenger, all out of breath, arrived to call him to a case of great urgency.

Dr. Brownell, seeing the need to hurry, asked me if I could come as well on the following day. Of course I released him.

He hurried away, saying:

"I am very sorry to leave you, but it can't be helped. Step into the house and see Mrs. Brownell. I am sure she will be glad to see you. Go through that door—it is the nearest way. You will find the hall a little dark; but go straight ahead and you will be all right."

Then he hurried away, and in a moment was gone.

I went to the door which I understood him to have pointed out. I discovered that there were two doors close together. I selected the left-hand one. I turned the knob, and pulled the door open. The hall beyond appeared to be quite dark, but I remembered what he had said about that, and I felt safe.

I stepped into the hall; and instantly the door, which was a heavy affair made of oak, closed upon me, pushing me out of its way into the hall.

Then I discovered that I was in absolute darkness, although there was a bright day without. Nevertheless, recalling Brownell's instruction, I went ahead with much confidence.

Suddenly, to my infinite amazement, the ground seemed to open, and I plunged headlong downward into a suffocating darkness, at every instant striking cruelly upon hidden obstacles along the way.

At last, after having taken what seemed to be a great flight, I came heavily to a stone floor, where the darkness was as dense as ever before I fell. Fright was my first sensation, and indignation my next; for was it not likely that Brownell had played some ugly trick upon me; I sat perfectly still for a little while, doing much wondering.

There was nowhere the smallest glimmer of light; the darkness was ponderable and terrifying. With it was a silence so vast that the ordinary roaring in my ears became an obtrusive presence.

A little reason at last found exercise in my disordered faculties. I reflected that the abyss into which I had fallen was an unguarded flight of stairs, into which I had walked in the darkness. A cautious hand-survey verified the belief, for there I lay at the bottom of the stairs.

A moment later I remembered that I had seen two doors, one beside the other. It was very clear that I had made a mistake by choosing a door leading to the cellar.

It then was no serious matter at all, and I laughed at myself for my terror. All that was necessary was to ascend the flight, open the door, and emerge by the other.

Without any waste of time I went about putting this plan into use; but when I had clambered up the stairs and found the door, I discovered that I was securely locked within this dismal place! There was no nob on the inside at all. My first intention was to get relief by knocking on the door, but there quickly arose two

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reasons why I should not—no one was within; and besides, even if I should summon attention, how could I explain my ridiculous plight?

My clothing had been torn by my fall, and I knew by the token of a warm, sticky sensation about my face and neck that I had been hurt and was bleeding freely, I was satisfied there must be some way of escape from the cellar without alarming the household, and, though my prison was darker than night, I determined to exhaust this resource before trying the other.

Accordingly, I descended the stairs, and, by keeping my hand on one of the walls, began to creep forward, with the careful guard upon the possibility of another flight of stairs. Presently, I found a turn in the passage and followed it on. Then I came to a transverse passage, and was in doubt which way to turn.

Meanwhile the darkness did not relax in the smallest degree, and absolute silence surrounded me. I turned to the right; and in that direction, not far away, I saw an exceedingly thin line of light, which I surmised issued from the bottom of a door.

I went towards this, and was about to put my hand upon the door, when it occurred to me that caution sometimes was a valuable exercise. Thereupon I knelt and examined the line of light more closely; and it was somewhat disheartening to discover that the light, instead of being white, was yellow. In other words, it was gaslight, and not daylight, that shone beyond the door.

While thus I knelt, I thought I heard a certain scurrying within. It was a sound not very unlike that which I had heard in the dark passage, and which I had mistaken for automatic aberrations of my hearing sense. Now, the same sound gave me a certain depressing feeling of insecurity, as though a malign mystery, suited to this uncanny place, was preparing a grotesque, and, perhaps, dangerous reception for me. Should I abandon this enterprise and seek another door? There was danger that I might not find this one again. Indeed, was there anything to fear? Surely my conscience—

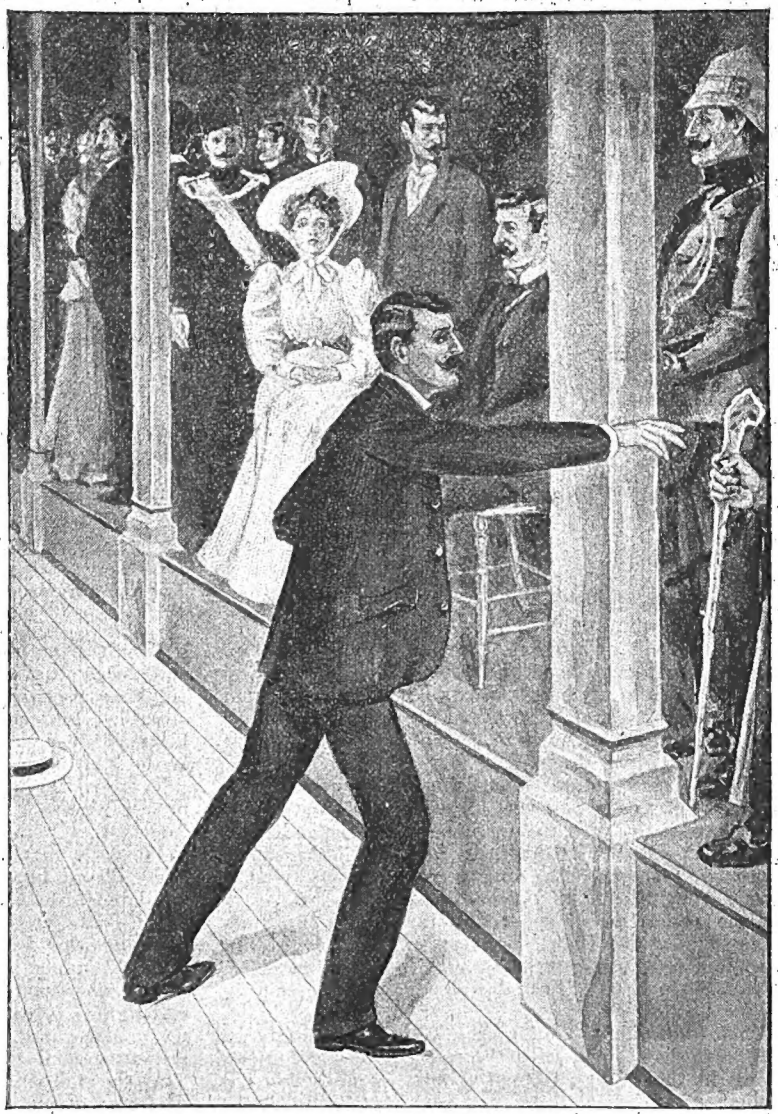
I gently pushed upon the door. It did not open. I found a keyhole and peered through it. A curious, large hall seemed to be beyond, lighted faintly, and I thought I saw the shadowy form of a woman float across the field of vision.

Just above the keyhole I found a knob. I turned it, and instantly the door flew open, pulling me violently with it; and before the instinctive movement to seize upon a support and hold it securely permitted me to take my grasp from the knob, I found myself wholly at the mercy of unresisted gravitation, flying undoubtedly downward, if reason is to be accepted, but in all other directions as well, if my feelings had been the ground of judgment.

But this time, instead of falling upon a cold, stone floor, I alighted on a deliciously soft carpet, of the thickest and finest rugs; and, for that matter, the distance which I had fallen was in reality quite small.

Upon looking about I found myself in the strangest place it was ever my fortune to see; but before I describe it I must say something in explanation of my unaccountable flight through the air.

The floor of this hall was sunk a few feet below the level of the passage by which I had approached, and down from the door led a flight of stone steps, which the pulling of the door had made me clear as I fell. I had thought that someone was concealed behind the door.



I seized the stick and tried to wrench it from his grasp.

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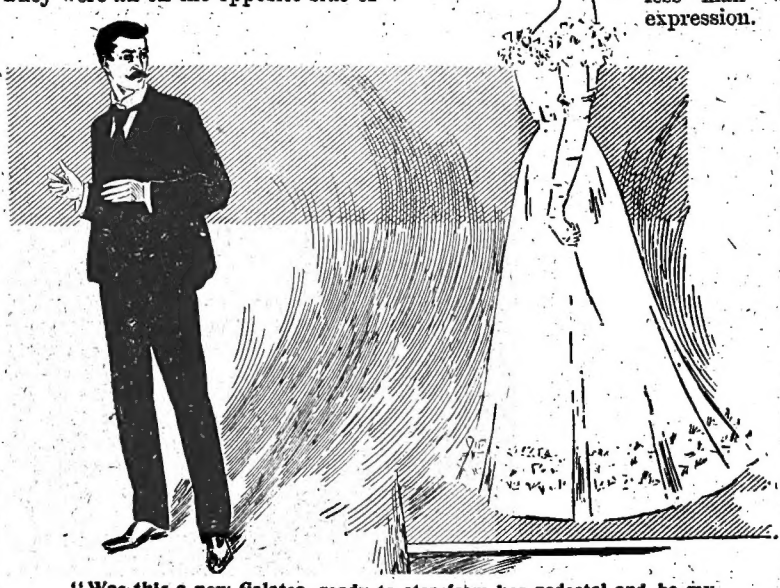
and pulled it open quickly when I turned the knob; but, upon looking, I saw no one, and I must believe that, for some reason which I shall not attempt to explore, the conduct of the door was guided by a powerful spring.

There was no time for any intelligent kind of thinking, for, besides being in a large hall of extraordinary appearance, I found myself in company with the most astonishing people. The walls were covered with curious things from every corner of the world.

The roof was perforated with openings, representing stars, animals, angels, demons and other things. These openings were covered with coloured glass of every shade, and above all was the light which shone through the grotesque openings and filled the room with a soft yellow radiance.

The light was too faint for a fine definition of features and so I could not then have said that I knew any of the persons present. They were all on the opposite side of the room, and everyone of them was looking at me. Some were sitting, others standing, and all were upon an elevated platform which ran round the room. The platform was raised not more than eight inches above the floor.

I scrambled to my feet and looked round upon them, of course expecting that I should be spoken to. But not a word was said and not a movement was made. The whole circumstance was so extraordinary, and the silence and immobility of the assembled people so impressive, that a strange tingling feeling, which all who have been frightened know the nature of, crept up my face and into my hair, and my heart beat with what seemed to be so strong a torsional force that it twisted a sharp pain out of its function.



"Was this a new Galatea, ready to step from her pedestal and be my devoted slave?"

I made an essay of speech.

"This," I said (indignation arising with the emergency of courage), "may be a very amusing pastime for you, but I have it that you are putting a very gross indignity upon me. If Dr. Brownell is in this distinguished company, I should like him to hear me say that I resent being made the victim of this boyish prank for for the edification of spectators invited to enjoy my discomfiture, and that I propose, without any loss of time, to give to my resentment such form and character as will cause it to have a disagreeable permanency in his recollection."

This wide-winged and rather silly threat might as well have been spoken to the red dragons and green angels in the ceiling, for not a word or movement did it elicit.

I found it easy to speak, but my voice sounded as though it had come from someone else to me alone, and made me uncertain that I had spoken at all. But a quickening anger was straining its leash within me, and I made no effort to control it.

A sense or outrage, shame and indignation swept over me; there were things I would not bear.

At this moment, Brownell's individuality emerged from the dim shadows of the company, and I walked straight up to him. He looked at me steadily as I approached, the old, good-natured, half-quizzical expression that I knew so well sitting upon his face.

I had approached him very near, when an indefinable violent sensation seized upon me and held me from further advance. Likely it was as much dread as terror; but whatever it was, there I stood grown to the floor, staring in dismay at this silent and motionless man with the quizzical expression.

Quite near me was an old man sitting on a chair, his hand resting on a heavy stick. I seized the stick and tried to wrench it from his grasp, intending to brain Brownell with it; but think what must have been my horror to see the old man's arm come away from his body with the stick, the hand still retaining its hold! I threw the stick away with a shudder and went up closer to Brownell. I caught him by the shoulders, and shook him with such violence that his head rolled on the floor at my feet.

Then the truth burst through the envelope of my vast and inconceivable stupidity—not all stupidity, for another affliction beset me—these were all wax-figures! I had stumbled into one of those queer nooks in Brownell's house where some of his treasures were stored, and where, in these uncanny ways, he enjoyed himself alone.

The reaction from this discovery was peculiar. At first I laughed; but my laughter became so loud and furious that I saw it was hysteria, and then I had trouble to check it. My head was splitting, and my throat was cracked and burning. Pains of various kinds found employment in torturing me, and they were pains to which I was in nowise accustomed. Therefore, it was necessary that I make haste to escape from this almost unearthly place.

The silence and apparent intelligent immobility of the wax-figures were more than depressing. I began to fear, indeed, that, after all, they would take on life and present some new form of suffering for my torture.

At the end of the hall was a wide door draped with a *portière*. From where I stood I could see the white satin of a woman's skirt just behind the *portière* on one side. Evidently no light entered that room, except the

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weak, diffused light of the demons and angels in the room where I was standing and hence it was much darker beyond the *portières;* but after looking around, I saw that if there were any escape, except by the way I had come, it must be through the room in which stood the woman in satin. Yet I feared to enter that room.

The dim light, the woman behind the *portière*—it all looked mysterious and dread-lurking. It was evident that the woman stood, as did the others, on a platform; but was that sufficient upon which to construct a belief that she, too, was wax? And would it not be all the better if she were flesh and blood? Assuredly, for that meant deliverance.

I went, without further thinking, to the *portière,* and passed within the room, having an unaccountable care that I did not pass too near the woman in satin.

I went into the room and looked around for a door. None could I find. My gaze fell upon the woman whose skirt I had seen, and then came upon me the very heaviest blow of all in that day of miseries; for there before me, beautiful and radiant, embodiment of all the finest graces of womankind, unspeakably winsome, and in all possible ways the loveliest woman under the sun, stood the physician's wife. If only it had been she, indeed, instead of an artful wax counterfeit!

I stood and admired her to my heart's content, and then I looked another way and continued my search for the door.

In what ever way I turned, I felt that the soft blue eyes of this enchanting figure were upon me. This gave me a certain fear, the meaning of which, beyond a consciousness of extreme nervous irritation, I was not able to understand. My disorder began to take on an exhilaration much like that which comes from hasheesh, imparting a quickening power to my senses and a keen edge to my imagination.

A feeling of happy confidence and lively enthusiasm struck off the angles of the fear which formerly had depressed me, and I became bold, valiant and adventurous. What an inspiring effect even the wax-image of a beautiful woman may have on a man!

I again looked at the figure in satin. Could I have been in error? Was it possible that a wax figure could be caught stealing a quick glance at me and suppressing a delicious smile? Was this a new Galatea, ready to step from her pedestal and be my devoted slave?

A great hope, so wild that I dared not give it too generous entertainment, leapt up from my heart. Fool or madman—which was I? Though the whole world might be consumed with love of her, she would remain steadfast in the way of a wife for ever. It was wholly impossible that she should choose this astounding way of letting me know that the one secret of my life had slipped away from me and had been welcomed into her own life.

I gazed upon her, filled with awe. Her head slowly turned, her glorious eyes rested full upon my face, and the sweetest smile that I had ever seen on her beautiful face saturated all my sensibilities with inconceivable delights. There was a meaning in that look and smile that I had never seen before, and the light that shone through it was a welcome to me!

I went closer to her, my feet winged with joy. The smile beckoned, the glance was a reassurance.

"Alice!" I cried.

"I have waited for you long," she answered; and there can be no music on earth so sweet as those words.

I caught her in my arms and drew her to my breast, nearly crushing her. I looked up into her face and she looked down into mine. I drew her from the pedestal.

All at once a look of horror came into her face.

"You are covered with blood!" she cried.

"It is nothing," I protested.

The look of horror became one of terror.

"Oh," she said, "there is blood on your face and villainy in your heart! So this is how you would betray your best friend and wreck my life. I will save him and you."

With that I saw something bright and keen glitter a moment in her hand, and in an instant a thing cold and sharp slipped between the ribs of my breast. I choked; a blindness assailed me, and I felt myself going all at large to the floor.

* * * * *

Dr. Brownell was sitting beside me in a room of his house, and I was lying in bed with a feeling of great weakness. He saw that I was watching him. He arose and stood over me, and his face showed much relief.

"You are all right now, aren't you, old fellow?"

How kind his voice was!

"Yes."

I felt no pain in my breast, but feebly I put up my hand.

"Is the wound dangerous?" I asked.

"What wound?"

I made no reply.

"The only wound you had was a slight abrasion of the scalp, and that has been cured a week."

I dared not ask any more questions.

"Alice came in to see you this morning and left these flowers for you. I told her I thought you would be all right to-day, and she will come to see you as soon as I send her word. By the way, old man, that was a curious mistake you made in getting among my wax-figures. We found you unconscious there. In your delirium you must have developed a strong dislike for the figures of Alice and me, as you completely demolished them."

W. C. M.


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# MY RUN FOR LIFE.

## A SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE.

I WAS young and careless at the time, but my "run for life" sobered me—at least, for a few days. Youth is generally endowed with a superabundance of animal spirits, together with a natural buoyancy; agencies which soon overcome the temporary effects of any serious occurence that may intrude itself into the normal condition of life in its "teens."

I had just been newly imported from Scotland into the South American town of Rosario on the banks of the Rio Parana, a bright little port increasing in importance every year, and a central shipping depôt for wool, grain, and hides brought from the many villages dotted over the surrounding prairies.

From Rosario I had a long journey before me, having to make my way, as best I could, to a hamlet rejoicing in the euphonious title of Frayle Muerto, or, in English, "The Dead Monk," and situated in the province of Cordova, which adjoins that of Santa Fé, whose capital is Rosario.

Looking about me for some mode of conveyance into the interior, I was fortunate enough to fall in with a Mr. Wilson, an Englishman, who had been for a long time in the country, and was starting next day with a "tropa," or troupe of mule-waggons for Cordova, the route to which place passed within a few miles of my destination.

I gladly arranged to accompany him; and the following morning saw me seated in a covered cart drawn by mules, make my entry first on to the great flat pampas that, relieved by occasional patches of forest, stretch for hundreds of miles away to the foot of the mighty Cordilleras.

A first view of the prairies of South America can never be forgotten; it is more impressive than the feeling when in mid-ocean. Naught is seen but the great expanse of heaving billows lapping the horizon on every side.

The tall prairie-grass bending before the breeze resembles the motion of the restless sea. The verdure is varied and beautiful, dotted here and there with immense ant-hills, from and to which industrious armies of ants march, some laden with leaves and broad blades of grass, which, presenting a surface sufficient for the wind to catch, considerably increase the burden of the staggering insect, sometimes toppling it entirely over, and reminding one of our advertising sandwich-men at home.

We had made an early start, so when mid-day came our little caravan was glad of a rest. The mules were unyoked from their light waggons and allowed to stray round about, picking up what best suited their tastes from the great variety of grasses by the wayside.

A fire was soon kindled, and the great native roast called asado got ready. The asado is simply a cut of beef, through which an iron rod is run, this rod being stuck in the ground and slanted over the fire in a manner that allows the beef to be quickly cooked.

No meal is complete without the native tea, and both the tea itself and the manner of taking it are very different from the cup-and-saucer European custom. A small gourd about the size of an ordinary teacup is used, a hole being cut at one end, into which are put two or three spoonfuls of a herb called yerba—a plant indigenous to some parts of the country. The remaining space in this gourd is then filled up with hot water and occasionally a little sugar; and this maté or tea is enjoyed with the agency of a tube, through which it is sucked, American cocktail fashion, by the happy possessor for the time being, who, when he has drawn through the last drop of this South American nectar, hands the maté-cup to the servant, who, filling it up again with water, and, if necessary, adding a little more yerba and sugar, passes it on to guest number two; and so on, each one having several turns at the suction business, until all are satisfied. This mode of tea-drinking naturally enough takes a long time, and we were quite ready for a siesta, which lasted until the great heat of the noonday sun had decreased in power.

Then all was hurry getting the mules caught and yoked; and this work required no little skill and patience, for mules are as stubborn in one country as in another, and not only have a will of their own, but take a great many opportunities of giving ocular demonstration that such is the case, in a manner highly suggestive of there being a right and a wrong way of going about anything, but especially a wrong way. However, we eventually moved on, and did not again halt till sunset.

Next morning we were off again by daybreak, and for the first time I saw the "mirage," which at early morn frequently forms itself on the prairie horizon and is a most impressive spectacle. The imagination which has often pictured to itself castles in the air has them now full in sight, and to all appearance real and tangible; and villages and farms, which are many leagues too far off to be seen by the ordinary light of day, stand forth, on a seeming foundation of shimmering air, clear and with every prominent object distinctly defined. Late in the afternoon of that day we arrived at a dilapidated-looking hut, at which point, being the nearest to Frayle Muerto, I was to part company with my companion and his mule caravan.

While Mr. Wilson was arranging with the owner of the hut to supply me with a horse and a mounted guide,

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so that I might get over to my destination that same evening, I had time to look about me, and was greatly impressed with the forlorn-looking condition of my surroundings.

The rancho, or native hut, was a wretched structure, with mud walls and a clumsily thatched roof, and consisted of two rooms, one of the apartments evidently being used as a kitchen and bedroom, while the other appeared to be of a nondescript character, There was no attempt at cultivation, the prairie-grass growing up to the very walls of the house, excepting in the front, where constant use had stamped out the grass and left the bare earth, on parts of which was a small yard of posts or corral, in which were confined some horses.

Lounging about the gate of this yard were some half-dozen natives, or rather gauchos, as, judging from their appearance, they were more like partly-civilised Indians.

The costume of each consisted of a red shirt, a pair of white drawers, partly covered by a species of petticoat called a chiripa, and the native cloak or poncho; a broad belt was worn round the waist, and a gaudily-coloured handkerchief tied over the head took the place of the Spanish sombrero.

The garments, such as they were, had stood many a rough storm, but seemed incapable of standing many more, the material being of the poorest and thinnest, while the original colours had long since faded away. These men were mostly barefooted, and their coarse, matted hair and swarthy faces told of few interviews with the toilet-table.

Before parting with Mr. Wilson, I took occasion to refund him some expenses he had incurred for me during our journey together, and when paying him I thoughtlessly exposed my purse, which was well-lined with bright gold sovereigns. and I noticed that the eyes of some of the nat ves had been attracted towards us while we were settling accounts.

Whether Mr. Wilson saw this or not I cannot say, but he did not leave the place until, after a hearty farewell between us, he saw me mounted and along with my guide fairly started for Frayle Muerto.

Although 1 had a little experience of riding in Scotland; this was my first "mount" in America, and nei her the horse nor myself got on well together. The native recado is very different from our home saddle, and sometimes, as in the present case, has only one little wooden stirrup, just large enough to admit of your big toe resting in while you mount.

This want of stirrups and my pulling the bridle English fashion, instead of, as is the native mode, merely allowing the reins to gently touch the neck of the horse on the contrary side towards which he is to turn, had the effect of making both of us very uncomfortable. There was nothing but open prairie to be seen, excepting to the westward, where I could see a long line of trees, and in their direction we were going.

I had just taken my last look at Mr. Wilson's caravan, as, wending its way into a cañada or slight depression in the prairie. it disappeared from my sight, when I was startled by loud shouts, and on looking back I saw some of the gauchos, whom I had left at the native hut, now mouuted and galloping towards me.

On arriving at close quarters. they did all they could to frighten my horse by swinging their lassoes over their heads and cantering round me in a gradually lessening circle, my guide basely deserting me and joining in the attack, This novel proceeding had the effect of making my horse plunge violently, and as I only knew very few words of the native language, I could hardly convince them by persuasive argument to desist.

In my attempts to keep my seat in the saddle, I foolishly tried to place my foot and my confidence in the wretched stirrup which suddenly giving way over I went, falling with my head downwards. The shock stunned me for a short time, but I still held firm to the bridle, and so detained the horse from escaping.

In a few minutes I managed to remount, and had no sooner done so, when, closing in on all sides, the gauchos actually "hounded" my horse back to the hut which I had so recently left. The fall had stupefied me to such an extent that I did not properly realise my position until after the natives had pulled me off the horse's back and examined if I had any firearms on my person.

I was the happy owner of a fine new revolver, but unfortunately it was useless to me then, being, along with the most of my baggage, safely stored in Rosario. Satisfying themselves that I was unarmed, the gauchos pushed me into the room which I had previously noticed as answering to no particular description, and, shutting the door, left me "alone in my glory."

After collecting my bewildered faculties as well as I could, I naturally began to think over the matter; but not deriving any satisfaction from its consideration, I took from my pocket a small edition of a book entitled "Easy Conversations in Spanish and English," which I had carried carefully with me since my arrival in the country, and diligently hunted up a few words which I thought applicable to my present situation. The most *apropos* "conversation" 1 could find, however, was one supposed to be on entering an hotel, which was hardly encouraging in the present state of affairs.

I had observed that the patron, or owner of the hut, with whom Mr. Wilson had settled preliminaries, had taken no active part in my imprisonment; so going to the door, which, having no lock, was easily opened, I shouted, in my easily commanding tone:

"Patron, Patron!"

Presently Mr. Patron came, and I, book in hand for ready reference, commenced a violent protest against his unlooked-for hospitality, and I wound up by insisting to be sent on with a guide immediate'y. As my oration was mostly English, and the remainder very questionable Spanish, it had the effect of irritating Mr. Patron sufficiently to cause him to shrug his shoulders significantly, and then hurry off, slamming the door behind him.

This proceeding disconcerted me most effectually; and when I began to think of the cunning way in which the gauchos had waited until Mr. Wilson and his caravan were out of sight and hearing before coming after me, my want of firearms, and their knowledge of my possessing gold, also my being an unknown stranger in these parts, and their own restless and irresponsible lives having no particular homes or livelihood, I felt then that my first adventure in this new country might also be my last. I recalled stories I had read and heard of these wild gauchos, their admiration of those of their number who had committed the most murders, their lawlessness and general indifference to bloodshed; and as 1 caused my blood to run cold with such recollections, I began to feel how helpless I was, and blamed myse f severely for not having taken the precautions adopted in these parts of going about well armed.

Looking out of the door, I observed the gauchos, who

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were standing a few yards off, talking earnestly to each other and constantly glancing towards me.

The sun had now set, and it was quickly growing dark, the twilight being of very short duration in this country. Taking out my case of cigarrettes, I lit one, and began to walk quietly up and down in front of the hut, puffing away as unconcernedly as I possibly could; but each turn I took was a little longer than its predecessor, and the length was always increased towards the side on which lay the wood we had previously started for.

While pretending to be thinking of nothing in particular, but simply enjoying my evening smoke unconscious of danger, I lit my second cigarette, continuing my one-sided promenade, until my "tether" was being stretched to such an extent that I saw the gauchos were beginning to suspect me; so taking an extra long turn, and watching my opportunity, I simply turned tail and fled. Running as fast as I possibly could straight for the distant forest, towards which we had originally set out. I never felt in such a hurry in all my life as I did on that occasion. I knew I had a good start, but, then, the fleet horses of the gauchos! As I anticipated, in the hurry and confusion which my unlooked-for retreat produced, it was a little time before I saw myself pursued, and every moment was precious to me then.

During my schooldays racing had always been my favourite sport, and I made good use of my practice now, especially when, on glancing over my shoulder, I saw some of the gauchos hurrying after me on horseback.

While straining every effort to increase my speed, I could not help constantly giving hasty looks behind; and I noticed that the gauchos were urging on their steeds with whip and spur while lying well forward, their ponchos flying behind with the wind, caused by their swift motion through the air.

I had by this time got very near to the wood, else I could not have seen it, as all daylight had already faded away. I knew that once amongst the trees I could elude my pursuers where the scrub grew thickest, as they would not be able to follow me quickly on horseback; and if they dismounted I was fully equal to them, as, notwithstanding my long run, I still felt in good fettle. Another spurt and I might gain the welcome shelter of the trees in time.

I could now hear the snorting of the horses as they tore after me, as well as the excited cries of their wild masters.

Another few yards and they would have run me down, when, with one great bound, I leapt over an old pile of dead branches, and dashed into a part of the wood where the undergrowth was heavy and the trees grew closely together.

I was now obliged to slacken my pace and thread my way with care through the luxuriant vegetation, trying to keep on in the same direction I had at first taken. I could not now hear the shouts of the baffled gauchos, who had evidently given up the chase, or else were following me silently on foot; but this I thought very unlikely, as they rarely walk far, living, as they do, almost entirely on horseback.

With an easier mind, but trembling excessively, owing to the inevitable reaction which sets in after any great excitement, I now sauntered leisurely along, and was soon surprised and delighted to see some large fires in the wood, round which I trusted to find some rancheros or farmers camping out for the night. I was advancing with a light heart, when, on a nearer inspection, I saw by the glare of the fires large groups seated in circles, seemingly enjoying a feast.

Two or three dogs, having scented a stranger, began to bark furiously, causing some of their masters to rise from their recumbent positions and gaze in my direction. I knew they could not see me, as I stood in a dark recess of the wood; but observing now that the number of men was very great, I suddenly remembered that large bands of Indians made frequent incursions to these parts, stealing cattle and often carrying off the wives and children belonging to the native farmers.

Knowing that the Indians had a deep-rooted hatred to foreigners, rarely allowing them to escape with their lives when captured, I even in my extremity thought of the old adage, "Out of the frying-pan into the fire," and almost wished myself back in the old rancho again.

Fortunately, however, I had evidently not been discovered; so off I set again, although fearing that perhaps while hurrying from the Indians I might rush into the clutches of the gauchos.

After some time, hearing no signs of pursuit, I slackened my pace, feeling unwilling to go very far, not knowing what I might next encounter.

I had not eaten anything all day, and I began to feel very hungry; I felt chilled as well, for it was midwinter, and, although the sun is strong during the day, the nights are often bitterly cold. Being my first experience of a South American forest, and not knowing what class of ravenous beasts inhabited such parts, I felt a sort of unconquerable dread creeping over me when any animal gave vent to its midnight howl, as I could not tell from what kind of brute the cry might emanate.

I laugh when I think of it now, but, in good truth, the situation was decidedly unpleasant, especially to a mere boy, and in a country till then principally known to me through the agency of the school atlas.

Tired out at last with excitment and fatigue, I felt a drowsiness stealing over me too strong to be overcome, and, frightened to trust myself on the ground with all sorts of unknown animals prowling about in search of supper, I scrambled up a tall tree, and, settling myself away high up on two stout forked branches, fell asleep before I had time to properly close my eyes.

I did not slumber long, the cold was too intense, and I woke up frozen so stiff that it was some time before I could move a limb. I saw the danger of being "up a tree" on such a night; so, painfully descending, I eventually got back some heat by hurrying onwards—where I could not tell.

Eventually I found myself on the banks of a river, and, as it seemed shallow, I determined to ford it. As I waded across the cold stream, the stars appeared to twinkle more brightly, and, as I landed, I felt that I was on the right side this time.

Climbing up the bank, I found myself on a road which quickly led me to some houses, in one of which I saw a light gleaming. I soon was at the door, which I found open, and entering I saw some natives indulging in a game of billiards, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour.

The place was a billiard saloon, and the proprietor coming forward, I showed him a card on which was written the address of the resident in Frayle Muerto, whom I wished to meet. He informed me, to my delight, that I was not only now safe in the village of the Dead Monk, but close to my friend's house.

Before leaving the saloon, however, I explained how hungry I was, and the kind saloon-keeper placed before me all he had in his store, from which I made one of the heartiest meals I ever enjoyed, though it consisted of—raisins and brandy!

J. J. HORSHAM.

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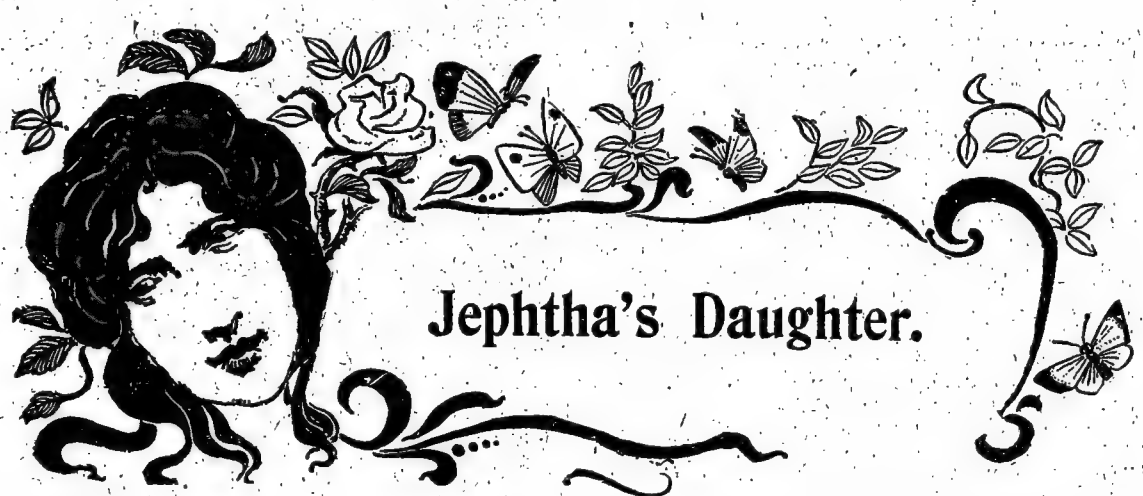

# Jephtha's Daughter.

"WHAT'S up, Jack?" said one policeman to another at the corner of Upper Brook Street, W., on a melting hot afternoon in August.

"Dunno! it's at 45, whatever it is. D'you know who lives there, Charlie?"

"Oh! it's that Yankee spiritual woman, medium they call her; guess its some sort of a meeting she's got on, guinea a time, you know—about our week's wages."

The street was filled with carriages driving up and setting down at No. 45. Fashionable ladies and a few idle men-about-town were the majority of the "outside" visitors, among whom might have been seen a certain Lord Ruthven, who was attracted more by the personal beauty and charm of the mistress of the house than by any belief in or respect for the spiritualistic propaganda.

Inside were assembled clairvoyants, mediums, palmists, telepathists, crystal-gazers, and the flower of the spiritualistic world generally, including Little Strangeways, the middle-aged spinster genius of Spook Rooms, W., and Rapper, the renowned recipient of weekly spirit correspondence, from the celebrated "Rosy." But the star of the occasion was Claudia S. Sennet, of Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

She had burst upon London during the season with the suddenness and brilliancy of a comet.

She was a woman of the typical New England sort, but with the addition of a stately, almost aristocratic manner, which made her wonderfully attractive.

Tall, with dark hair and eyes, and a mouth which seemed to possess a dual character, now expressing sweet womanliness and gentleness of soul, now compressed with a determined snap which boded ill for those in opposition to her. When driving in the "Row" she was the lovely cynosure of all eyes.

Whenever her smart little brougham slowed up by the railings, Lord Ruthven was never very far off, and might almost be counted upon to approach and enter into animated conversation with her.

Legends with regard to her antecedents were rife, but none of them could be relied upon.

She brought Society a new sensation, and with Society's usual disregard of such matters, it ignored rumour for reasons best known to itself. Her house in Upper Brook Street was magnificently furnished, and her means apparently abundant.

The crowd was enormous.

Spiritualistic *séances*, when the medium is beautiful and the surroundings in harmony, are always popular among the "smart" set.

Lord Ruthven seeks the mistress of the house everywhere. At last he discovers her seated behind a wealth of palms in the small conservatory at the head of the staircase.

"Do you know why I have sought you out, Claudia?"

"How can I tell?" she answers him, a little nervously for her.

"Surely you, who can read the thoughts and souls of men, can read my heart. I want your answer to-day. I want to go away from here, knowing that nothing will ever part you from me, that, as my wife, you will be safe and happy for evermore."

"But you know nothing of me, my disposition, my temper," looking up at him with her glorious eyes that seemed to gather in them that beautiful humidity which so touches the hearts of good men and true. "My blood is not of that 'blue' tint which passes current in your social sphere. I am nothing but a daughter of the Republic, a descendant of the old honest Puritan stock."

"I care not what you are! who you are!" replied her lover, "I love you, and to marry you is the dearest wish of my heart. Claudia, say that you love me."

"I do love you, but wait—wait till this *séance* is over, then if you still are of the same mind come to me again."

"The *séance* will—can make no difference to my love. Why wait until then—give me your answer now!"

"Do not press me," she somewhat sadly said, while a shiver appeared to pass over her frame.

With a sudden passionate movement she plucked a white rose from the bosom of her dress, and offered it to him.

"Take it," she said almost mournfully, "and if at the afternoon's end you are prepared to take me, place the rose in your coat; if your mind should change, well throw it away. I shall know."

She rose from her seat, and just saying "The time has arrived," she moved slowly down the stairs towards the dining-room, where her advent was eagerly looked for. She turns her head for a second only at the door, and then he sees her no more.

On her arrival a movement is made by the initiated. Claudia leads the way up the stairs, and the whole assemblage troop after her. At the door of the drawing-

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room she pauses a moment, and then enters the room which has been artificially darkened.

Everyone suits themselves with regard to seats, and then an expectant silence settles down upon all.

The proceedings commenced with the usual legerdemainic illusions. Bells tinkled, banjos responded to invisible fingers; the audience felt touches from presumably spirit hands, and the handwriting of deceased relatives and friends was seen on the wall.

Little Strangeways said, audibly, that someone had kissed her. Rapper, quite as audibly, said it was not possible, even in the spirit world. When the raps and inquiries of the lesser lights were ended Claudia spoke.

Her clear, musical voice thrilled through the room.

"Is the spirit of Jephtha S. Sennett present?"

Dead silence followed the question.

There was a sound as of a man awakened from a deep sleep.

"I am here," came in sepulchral tones, but with a pronounced American accent.

"In what relation do you stand to me?" said Claudia passionlessly.

"I am your father," was the reply.

"Give me your opinion from the spirit world of these present proceedings," continued Claudia.

The spirit of Jephtha heaved a deep sigh.

"They are a fraud from beginning to end," said the spirit. "For years you and I have been living upon the credulity of the public. This place with all its mechanical paraphernalia has been specially prepared for hoodwinking paying visitors. Fools patronise us, fools are befooled by us, and our sole aim has been to pander to their folly."

As if his last words were a signal, the lights flashed up, and the room became flooded with light.

It revealed, first the spell-bound audience, then the deadly-pale face of Claudia. It showed also the towering form of a grey-haired man, who stood grasping with both hands the edge of a large table. He had the appearance of one awakening from a cataleptic trance. Suddenly he seemed to divine the situation. He glared savagely at his daughter.

"You she-devil!" he cried hoarsely. "You have mesmerised me! You have caused me to betray our secret; you have sold us both!"

She did not answer. She looked searchingly towards where Lord Ruthven stood by the door.

The rose was not in his coat!

Claudia continued to gaze in his direction with an almost despairing look in her eyes, as if she half hoped that he would uplift the sign. But he did not even look at her.

With a quick, impulsive gesture he left the room, his voice immediately afterwards being heard at the house door calling for a hansom.

"Oh, Heavens!" she moaned piteously, "he might have saved me!—but he has deserted me—and I loved him!"

* * * * *

The next day the legend "To Let" might have been read on a board outside the house, No. 45 Upper Brook Street.

During the winter Society, enjoying its *dolce far niente* on the Riviera, occasionally heard of a certain Jephtha S. Sennett, who kept a select and luxurious private gambling-house in the neighbourhood of Nice.

His beautiful decoy was a woman of peculiar magnetic power, known to the *habitués* as Claudia.

Ralph Enderby.

# "Have You Got That Ten-Pound Note?"

## SIX TEN-POUND NOTES CLAIMED.

Below we give short accounts of the six men who, up to the present, have been lucky enough to secure the *Pearson's Weekly* £10 notes.

**Mr. John Lotan, 22 St. Anne's Chambers, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.**—winner of £10 No. 33—is a lavatory attendant at Ludgate Hill Station. One morning, while he was reading a copy of *Pearson's Weekly*, a gentleman walked in, and whi e washing was asked by Mr. Lotan: "Have you got that £10 note?" and to his astonishment a sealed envelope, No. 33, was produced and handed to him.

**Inspector Charles Lee, 1 Agnes Terrace, St. Mary's Avenue, Southend**—winner of £10 No. 27—is Cliffs-Inspector and Superintendent of Gardens to the Southend Corporation. One night he was walking near the Admiralty Flagstaff, when, after asking several men the well-known question, he happened to meet with the right one, the natural consequence being that he received the envelope containing the equivalent to £10.

**Mr. Harry Edward Baker, 4 Beaconsfield Road, Magdalen Road, Norwich**—winner of £10 No. 1—is an elementary school teacher at Norwich. Having seen in a local paper that a Ten-Pound man was expected at Norwich, he kept on the look-out for the mysterious stranger. One afternoon he was in the Market place, and noticed there a middle-aged man whom he thought was a likely sort of person to be intrusted with the precious missive. He followed the stranger up, and at first opportunity entered into conversation with him, later on showing him the front page of *Pearson's Weekly*, and asking if he had the £10, whereupon a Sealed Envelope was put into his hand.

**Mr. Robert Gautier, 132 Clarence Road, Wimbledon**—winner of £10 No. 36—is in the employ of a photographic material dealer in the West-end of London. He was calling on the manager of a large firm one day, and the matter of the £10 Scheme happened to be brought up. During the conversation Mr. Gautier (who has been a regular reader of *Pearson's Weekly* for some years) took a copy of the paper from his pocket, and, showing the front page to the man to whom he was talking, said, "Have *you* got that £10 note?" and, to his surprise, the gentleman produced one of the Sealed Envelopes.

**Mr. W. W. Tonkin, 5 Grove Road, Brixton**—winner of £10 No. 30—was at a friend's house spending the evening, when the conversation turned on *Pearson's Weekly* £10 Scheme. Mr. Tonkin, who was very enthusiastic over the scheme and made the most of his opportunities, showed the front page of *Pearson's Weekly* to each person present, and was astonished when, after he had nearly gone the round of the company assembled, he found himself the possessor of one of the coveted envelopes.

**Mr. Charles Wright, 30 Oxford Gardens, North Kensington**—winner of £10 No. 12—was in the smoking-room of the Crown Hotel, Southampton, and jokingly asked a stranger for the £10 as mentioned in *Pearson's Weekly*, which he handed the stranger to read of the scheme. His astonishment was great when the £10 letter was handed to him. The landlord was close on Mr. Wright's track, and only missed the coveted envelope by a short lead. Mr. Wright is a member of the choir at the Chapel Royal, Savoy.

There are now forty other Ten-Pounders walking about the country, and all you have to do is to show the right person a copy of the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* and the £10 is yours.

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# Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

## XXIV.—He Sets Out to Do a Little Reforming.

When Mr. Bowser got up the other morning, there was an uncertain look in his eyes—that is, Mrs. Bowser was not certain whether he was going up street to blow up the butcher or down street to blow up the tailor. He was moody and silent during breakfast, and as he made no move to leave the house after the meal Mrs. Bowser kindly inquired if he wasn't feeling well.

"I'm feeling well enough," he replied, "but I shall remain at home this morning. There are several little things I want to look into and put right, and one of them is at the door now."

"Do you mean that costermonger?"

"That's exactly what I do mean. I am going to find out whether a man with an old donkey and a wobbly cart has any legal right to stop in front of my house and shout and yell and shriek and howl and bawl and roar like that. Just listen to him! By the living jingo, but it's no wonder that we've had five deaths in this street within the last two weeks!"

"But you—you won't go and say anything to him!"

"Won't I!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser as he clapped on his hat and opened the door and bustled down the steps, while the family cat and Mrs. Bowser looked after him.

"Plums! Cucumbers! Bananas!" yelled the man at the top of his voice and with a wave of his hand and a nod of his head toward every house in the terrace.

"Look here, you howling idiot," began Mr. Bowser as he walked up to him, "I want to know who gave you the legal right to murder folks with your voice?"

"D'ye mean my shoutin'?" asked the man in considerable astonishment.

"Of course I do! I want to know if the law gives you the right to whoop and yell and bellow and shriek and groan in order to call attention to the pig's food in your cart. If it does, I'll see that it's changed. If it doesn't, I want you to go."

"I say, old man," replied the costermonger with a leer, "you must have fallen out of bed this mornin'. I've been sellin' wegetables for five years, and you are the first person I've met who wasn't charmed with my voice. Better tie a wet towel round your head and go to bed ag'in!"

"Don't give me any impudence!" shouted Mr. Bowser. "You may be licensed to cart vegetables and fruits round, but are you licensed to set a thousand people's nerves on edge by your beastly howling?"

"I'm licensed to do anything I want to, old kicker," replied the man, "and if you want to make a fuss about it come on. You look one of the sort who'd take the bread out of a poor man's mouth, but if you try it on me I'll make you sorry!"

A crowd of children and pedestrians began to gather, and, realising that he would have the worst of it, Mr. Bowser walked into the house. The costermonger yelled "Cucumbers!" after him, and the children applauded, and Mrs. Bowser said:

"Don't you see you can't do anything with such men as that? They come along here from daylight to dark, and everyone yells just like this man."

"But it's against the law, and I know it is!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he struck the wall with his fist.

"I want to know who gave you the legal right to murder folks with your voice?"

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"Well, there's lots of things against the law, but you can't change 'em. If the police permit these costermongers to yell and scream, they won't stop their noise for anything you say."

"Then I'll break some one's neck!"

Mr. Bowser went out and sat down on the front steps. The costermonger grinned at him and moved on, but it was scarcely a minute before an old clothes man turned the corner and set up his yell.

He had yelled about sixteen times before he reached the Bowsers' gate, and there he stopped and looked at the man on the steps and screamed out in agonized tones:

"Old clo'! Old clo'! Any old clo' to sell!"

"Move on, you scoundrel!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he rose up.

"Old clo'! Old clo'! I buy old clo' for cash!"

"By the beard of Plato, but I'll have your life if you don't move on!" exclaimed Bowser as he clattered down the steps, with a tragedy in either eye.

The old clothes man ran across the street, but no farther, and from his new position he shrieked and shouted and yelled until he had collected a crowd of half a hundred people and Mr. Bowser had been forced into the house.

"You can see you can't do anything," said Mrs. Bowser.

"But I will do something!" he hotly replied. "Are all the ordinances of this city made for the benefit of such howling demons as that? Has a tax-payer and and property owner no rights? If there are no laws to protect me, then I'll protect myself!"

Out he went again, and he was just in time to encounter a man, who had turned in from a side street, yelling:

He was seized and banged against the fence.

"Knives to grind-o! Knives to grind-o! Bring out your knives to grind-o!"

Mr. Bowser walked down to the gate. He looked like a dangerous man, but the knife-grinder was willing to take chances if he could make a few coppers. He halted his grinder on wheels and uttered his yell of "Grind-o!" as if Mr. Bowser were forty yards away.

He was still hanging on the "o" when he was seized and banged against the fence, and a voice rang in his ears:

"You infernal nuisance, shut up, or I'll break your neck!"

The grinder shut up. He looked into Mr. Bowser's eyes and became afraid. However, as he was released after a minute and told to move on his courage returned and he hadn't got more than ten feet away before he turned and said:

"You knock me and bang me, and I take the law on you!"

Mrs. Bowser opened the door and tried to argue the matter with Mr. Bowser, but he declared he'd wet his hands in the lifeblood of the next nuisance who came along.

He didn't have over ten minutes to wait. A hokey-pokey vendor, an umbrella mender, and a tinker suddenly appeared in company, and all were yelling to drown the notes of the band at the corner.

Mr. Bowser rose up like a bull about to make his last charge, and he was at the gate as they halted.

"Umbrellas t' mend! Mend your pans! Hokey-pokey!" shouted the three at him as they waved their arms about.

Mrs. Bowser threw up the window to call out, but she was too late. Mr. Bowser had started. He upset hokey-pokey cart and hokey-pokey dealer, he filled the air with old umbrellas and tinker tools, and it was Spion Kop over again, with Mr. Bowser in place of the Boers.

He met the enemy, and they were his, and in five minutes they were in possession of the field of battle. He was cheered by the crowd which gathered, and a dozen over-enthusiastic taxpayers insisted on a speech. A man had arisen who had taken up the cudgel for reform, and they wanted to know his policy towards fireworks, footballs, and spinning tops.

Mr. Bowser backed up against the gate and might have given them an outline, but before he could collect his oratory a fat policeman burst through the crowd and seized him and said:

"You old ruffian! But you want to get up a riot and disturb half the town, do you? Come along with me!"

Mr. Bowser was walked to the police-court and left in the cell till the magistrate was ready to hear his case and say:

"You may be a citizen and a taxpayer and a reformist, but you have no right to break loose and take the law into your own hands. I fine you five pounds, sir, and if you are brought here before me again on the same charge I shall feel it my duty to put you where you can do no more harm for the next six months!"

"Didn't I tell you how it would end?" asked Mrs Bowser when he got home.

But he said no word in reply. He realised that if he even opened his mouth he would drop dead.

M. QUAD.

*Next Week*: **He Turns to Root Beer as a Family Tonic.**

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# A Written Proposal.

Mrs. Bland had been looking for a letter from her daughter, but now that it had come she was not pleased at its contents.

Amy had accepted the invitation of a former schoolmate to spend the summer holidays at her home in Sussex, and she had been there nearly five weeks.

Mrs. Bland had urged her daughter to accept the invit tion, as it would give Amy a splendid chance of picking up strength for the winter at comparatively little cost; and as they were none too well off, and the girl could not have afforded more than a fortnight's stay in the country on her own account, the offer was not to be lightly refused.

Amy had protested that her happiness would be incomplete as her mother was not with her; they usually spent the vacations together, and found great happiness in these between-term rests even although they went no farther from their home than the nearest parks.

But Mrs. Bland had over-ruled the objection. Amy was a teacher in a private school and was studying hard that she might be able to take up a lucrative appointment; she needed a complete change and must not neglect this oppportunity of obtaining it.

The Blands had never been well off, but things had gone happily and smoothly until Mr. Bland died. He left his widow a small income, barely enough to keep her and her daughter, and Amy had determined to make use of the beginnings of a good education in order to earn a little and continue her studies. The post of teacher enabled her to do this.

There had always been the fullest confidence between mother and daughter. Mrs. Bland, now forty-one, retained much of her freshness and general youthfulness; she believed in being a rea companion to her daughter, able to take part in her amusements and pleasures, and even assist her to some extent in her studies.

The letter from her daughter, which she now held in her hand, was disquieting inasmuch as it told the mother that for the first time she was not entirely in the confidence of her daughter.

"I suppose it must be so," sighed Mrs. Bland. "Amy is twenty, and I must expect her to be falling in love, and naturally she will not tell me all about it. A mother must always be prepared to have someone else occupy the most promment place in her daughter's heart. Still, it is not entirely that which worries me."

She read the letter again and the serious look on her countenance became more intense.

"It may seem foolish—selfish, perhaps—of me, but I feel that I want to watch over her choice. I do not wish to see her suffer from the heartache, as I did. Girls sometimes bestow their affections on one who is unworthy; and sometimes they fall in love with a man who is only playing with them. Girls are not the only ones who flirt and jilt. True, my experience did not come under either of those heads; it was a foolish lover's quarrel. I was fortunate indeed in my second venture."

Mrs Bland's thoughts had drifted from her daughter to herself. She pulled herself up and glanced at the letter again.

"She hints at a love affair, but she is evidently distressed in a way which cannot be attributed to the state of being in love. There is something else which I cannot fathom, and that makes me fear for her peace of mind. Oh, dear, I wish I had not allowed her to go, after all! If I could only go to her and watch for myself!"

As Mrs. Bland laid the letter on the table her eyes fell on some words written on the top corner of the first page, close to the address, which she had not noticed; they were to the effect that the hostess had at that moment told Amy that that she intended to invite Mrs. Bland to spend the last fortnight of the holiday with them.

Then Mrs. Bland remembered that another letter had arrrived at the same time; it proved to be the invitation mentioned by Amy.

"This is indeed a providential piece of good fortune!" was the thankful exclamation of Mrs. Bland. "Now I may be able to save my dear girl from a possible heartache, or prevent it from becoming too serious."

On that same morning a conversation was taking place between Amy and her friend Blanche Winford in the old Manor House, which was the home of the latter.

"It is exceedingly kind and thoughtful of Mrs. Winford and you to extend an invitation to my mother," said Amy gratefully. "I admit now that it was the one drawback to the full enjoyment to my stay here that mamma was alone at home."

"My dear Amy," said Blanche in her airy manner, "I shall be very pleased to see your mother here, if only to prevent you from monopolising the attentions of the gentlemen."

"Oh, Blanche!" protested Amy, her cheeks flushing and a worried look appearing in her eyes.

Blanche laughed merrily.

"Well," she said with an attempt at seriousness, "it is a fact that Mr. Barton and Mr. Sutherst are both showing you marked attention, and there is only another gentleman in our small party. I confidently anticipate that you will have two prop sals before the end of your stay, if your mother's presence does not alter the condition of things."

Amy flushed a deeper red, and then, to her friend's amazement, covered her face with her hands and began to cry. Blanche's arms were round her friend in an instant, and the light-hearted girl was urging the other to dry her tears and confide her troubles to a sympathetic friend.

"I am in great trouble, Blanche," explained Amy. "I believe—I think—that Mr. Barton is in love—that is, I mean——"

"I know," returned the matter-of-fact Blanche. "The plain truth is that he is in love with you and you are in love with him. Oh, well,"—Amy made a feeble protest

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against the last statement—"you could soon fall in love with him; let us leave it at that. And the same remark applies to Mr. Sutherst, although he is in the neighbourhood of forty. And you don't know what to do?"

Amy opened her lips to reply, but said nothing.

"Now, my dear, I tell you plainly that Mr. Barton is a young man with very poor prospects, and if you marry him you will have a struggle all through life, about as hard as you have at present. I am talking sense, and you will credit me with no desire to hurt your feelings. I may be worldly, but common sense and so called worldliness generally go together. Now, if you marry Sutherst, you will have as good and kind and noble a man as you could wish to have for a husband, you will have money and be able to give your mother an easier time, and you will make the man and yourself happy, for I am convinced that Mr. Sutherst is one of the few men who love with all their heart and only love once. What does the difference in age matter?"

Amy had no time to reply, for Mrs. Winford entered; and while Blanche was talking with her mother, she ran upstairs to bathe her eyes.

Blanche's words had struck home. When Amy, a girl of fifteen, was sitting by the bed-side of her dying father, he had called his "little girl" and had asked her to do her best when she grew up for the dear mother whom they both loved so well; and Amy, with enthusiasm born of love and grief had promised. And now it devolved upon her to act in accordance with that promise; she had never forseen such a contingency, and she was sorely perplexed.

If she followed the dictates of her own heart, she would throw in her lot with the younger man; he was a manly young fellow, and she believed that they could together carve out a fortune for themselves. She did not share her friend's worldly views. On the other hand, she fully indorsed all that Blanche had said about Sutherst; she felt that she might learn to love a man such as he. And her mother's future would be assured.

The difference in the manner of the two men towards her was marked. Barton was more of the lover, while Sutherst always spoke to her and treated her in a way that was almost fatherly. The manner of the younger man was more calculated to attract the girl, yet she was bound to admit that she felt herself drawn towards the older. She longed for her mother to come, vaguely hoping that her presence would assist her in cutting the knot.

But by the time, two days later, that Mrs. Bland arrived, the girl had made up her mind to accept Sutherst if he should, as Blanche hinted, make a proposal. The sight of her mother tended to strengthen her determination; her promise to her father, and the lowly circumstances in which they lived, occurred to her mind with greater force and settled the problem that had worried her two days before.

Amy introduced her mother to young Barton, but she found that Mr. Sutherst and Mrs. Bland had met in the drawing-room and had "introduced themselves."

"Dear mamma," murmured Amy to hers lf, "I have never had a secret from her, and I will tell her about Mr. Sutherst—but I will not mention Mr. Barton, or my perplexity. After all, I am sure that I can love Mr. Sutherst!"

It was an illogical assertion to say that she had never had a secret from her mother, and in the same breath, to declare that she would not tell about Mr. Barton, and her short monologue ended with a sigh.

But the confession did not come till the evening of the following day, and then Amy made it in the privacy of her mother's bed-room before she retired. When she had concluded, the contrast between the faces of the two women was very striking; that of the daughter was red hot, whereas that of the mother was deathly pale and cold.

"My dear child," said the mother gravely, after a pause, "are you sure that you are not making a mistake? It may be that Mr. Sutherst is merely showing the interest of an older man in a young woman. He has probably heard something of your history and admires you for your determination to make the most of your ability; and—though perhaps I ought not to say it—you are a young woman who would command the respect and admiration of Mr. Sutherst's age and character."

Human nature is a strange thing; although Amy felt that there might be a great deal of truth in her mother's remark, and although that remark coincided with her own wishes, yet she rebelled against the assertion and defended her opinion as stoutly as if she hoped and believed with all her soul that it was the right one.

"No, mamma, dear!" she replied in a very decided tone. "I am convinced that Mr. Sutherst is in love with me. If he makes a proposal I shall accept him."

"And if not?" asked her mother, making a great effort to conceal the trouble that was agitating her.

Amy did not know how to reply; there was a conflict of emotions now raging in her heart, a conflict called into existence by these words. Sutherst or Barton?

Her very soul seemed to be rent by the opposite feelings; she turned pale and then red, and finally buried her face in her mother's lap as she had done many times before in the old days. Her mother, not understanding the cause of her silence, looked down upon the brown hair with quivering lips and eyes suspiciously moist.

"I do not wish to make you unhappy, Amy," she said tenderly, stroking the head that lay in her lap, "but I wish to spare you a heartache. Do not allow yourself to be mistaken; do not be carried away by girlish emotions. I have watched Mr. Sutherst and—and I do not share your opinion."

Amy did not reply. If Mr. Sutherst was not in love with her, all her visions of being able to release her mother from poverty would vanish. By a strange perversity of nature, her feelings seemed to undergo a change, her whole being cried out for the love of Mr. Sutherst and she could scarcely endure the thought that she had been mistaken.

No more was said that evening. Both lay awake until early morning; the mother could imagine the feelings of the daughter, but the daughter could not by any chance have divined the thoughts that were passing through the brain of the mother—and Amy would have been intensely surprised had she been able to do so.

On the following morning Mrs. Bland took occasion to remind her daughter of the warning given over night; it was a brief, motherly sentence, for Mrs. Bland showed no desire to talk again on the subject at any length. After that the matter dropped.

Mr. Sutherst's attentions did not relax with the appearance of Mrs. Bland at the Manor House; he showed the same interest in Amy, and the only difference was that he included Mrs. Bland in any proposition for an excursion or a walk.

Amy regarded this as a distinctly honourable course of action and, contrary to what might have been expected, was glad that her mother was with them. She will now see exactly how matters stand, was the thought that crossed the girl's mind.

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Amy rather dreaded Blanche's teasing, but that light-hearted young lady remained mute on the all-important subject. Amy caught her friend looking at the trio with a peculiar glance on more than one occasion, but she did not mind the look so long as Blanche's tongue did not come into action.

Ten days passed away very pleasantly; scarcely one of them went by without Mr. Sutherst accompanying Mrs. Bland and her daughter for an hour or two, and on three of those days young Barton was also invited to become one of the little group.

All the other guests had departed; both gentlemen had eagerly accepted an invitation to extend their stay. That invitation proved that Mrs. Winford saw more than many people do.

Blanche did not seem to mind being left out of the party; when asked to go with them, she made an excuse that she had to help her mother, and now and then she carried off young Barton so that the other three might be alone—rather to that young gentleman's disgust, it must be admitted.

It was the day before that on which the four guests were to depart, and no proposal had come from Mr. Sutherst. Amy's good spirits began to flag. She asked herself whether she really cared, and a something within her replied very boldly, "No!" But she crowded down that feeling and tried to believe that she did care very much.

"Here is a letter for you from Mr. Sutherst, Amy," said Blanche, entering her friend's room that evening. "I congratulate you, my dear! I'm sure it is a proposal. The poor man did not care to speak, I suppose, so he begged me to deliver this personally and keep the matter a profound secret."

And imprinting a kiss on Amy's cheek, she vanished.

"Oh, mamma, he has written me a letter of proposal!" cried Amy, entering her mother's room. "Mr. Sutherst, I mean."

"Impossible!"

"I will let you read the letter, mother dear," replied Amy, feeling a little hurt at her mother's tone. "That will convince you. It's—it's—not exactly what I should have thought. It is—well, I don't understand all the references. He speaks as if he had known me for years—as if he had loved me for years. Still, there is no doubt that he is really and truly in love."

Mrs. Bland's hands trembled so violently that she could scarcely take the letter, and with her left hand she had to hold the back of a chair for support. She sat down and read the letter without a word, read it eagerly, greedily. Then she drew her daughter to her in the old manner and kissed her.

"Amy, was this letter really addressed to you?"

"It was 'Amy Bland' on the envelope, and Blanche brought it to me. You see, he begins 'My dear Amy.'"

There was a pause; the mother seemed to be making an effort to say something, but all she said in the end was:

"Let us find the envelope."

They found it in Amy's room. Mrs. Bland looked at it, then handed it to her daughter and pointed to the word "Mrs." before the name "Amy Bland."

The girl stared at it, then at her mother; her eyes wandered from one to the other in amazement.

"What does it mean?" she gasped.

"It means that the letter is addressed to me," replied Mrs. Bland tenderly. "That explains the references which you do not understand. Mr. Sutherst and I were sweethearts many years ago; we quarrelled. I married, and was happy in my choice; he never married, but has loved me ever since. We recognised each other as soon as we met, although so many years have passed. But I did not anticipate this proposal. I warned you, because I felt that Mr. Sutherst's attention was fatherly, not loverly. My poor Amy!"

But Mrs. Bland's sympathy was not required. It took Amy some minutes to understand the position, but when she realised that her mother would have a protector and wealth in her old age without any sacrifice on her (Amy's) part, a great load seemed to fall from her heart and scale to drop from her eyes.

And then she told her mother just how she had felt, and that she had made up her mind to marry Sutherst in order to help her mother.

"If he asked me," she concluded, "but he didn't! So that makes it much better for Mr. Barton—if he likes to take the chance!"

Barton did not see the chance just then, but he became aware of it later and took it.

Blanche never ventures to tease her friend about any of the circumstances of the holiday at the Manor House. She began to do so soon after Amy's engagement to Barton, but Amy silenced her by holding up a blank envelope, and asking: "Miss or Mrs.?"

"What a dolt I was to make the mistake!" admitted Blanche.

GEORGE KNIGHT.

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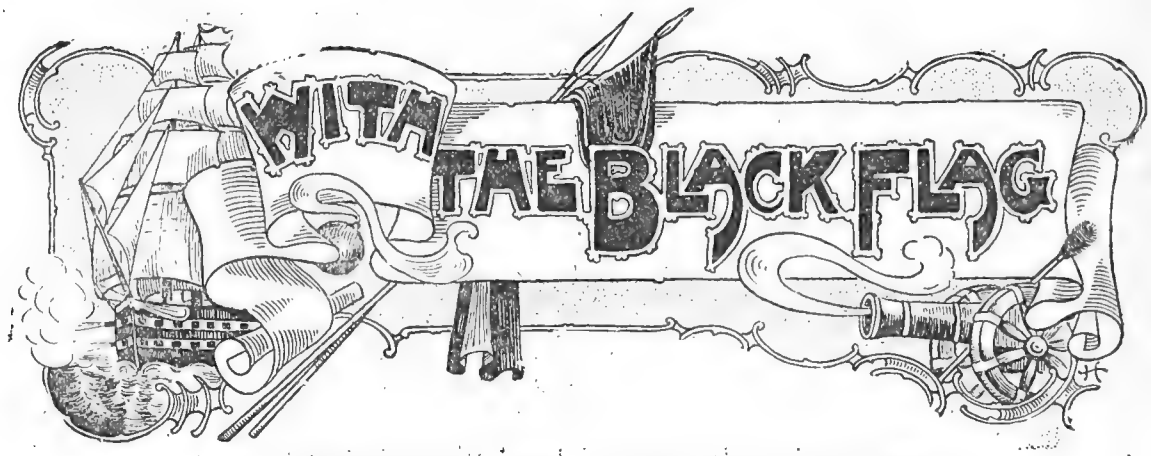


## A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

**Major Wyvenhoe,** commander of an expedition which went out from England to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. He is intrusted with dispatches for delivery to Bolivar, the Supreme Chief.

**Captain Cautley,** who is in charge of the ship which took the expedition out.

**John Ready,** the servant of Wyvenhoe.

**General Arismendez,** ex-Governor of Pampatar and Vice-President of the Venezuelan Republic. He received Wyvenhoe and Cautley on their arrival in Venezuela.

**Don Iago Santleo, and Antonio Bonanza,** two Venezuelans who accompany Wyvenhoe when he takes the dispatches to Bolivar.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### BONANZA'S STORY.

DON IAGO'S explanation made rather for darkness than light. While whetting my curiosity as to his antecedents it deepened the mystery in which he had shrouded himself from the beginning of our acquaintance.

He had seen the saying "all's well that ends well" in a book, presumably a Spanish book, and been told its meaning. Therefore he must know, or have known, somebody who knew English and had taught him to pronounce this phrase faultlessly, a phrase presenting peculiar difficulties to one conversant only with Spanish, which is spoken as it is spelt and possesses neither a "w" or the sound of "th."

For that he should have picked it up casually and hit upon the right pronunciation by chance was of course out of the question. He could only have acquired the proficiency which so much surprised me by considerable practice and hearing the words frequently repeated.

In short, Santleo must have been acquainted with an English speaking person, yet he protested that I was the only Englishman he had ever known, and it was almost inconceivable that there should be any aborigine or Spanish Creole on the western llanos or among the remoter mountains of Venezuela able to speak the language of Shakespeare with an irreproachable accent.

On the other hand, if he knew English why should he deny it, and if he did not want me to suspect that he knew it why had he said "All's well that ends well"? True, it might be an inadvertence. I inferred from his manner that it was—a supposition, however, that made the matter all the more bewildering, for no one quotes inadvertently in a language with which he is not tolerably familiar.

Moreover, though I had not known Don Iago long, we had been thrown much together and talked about many things, yet albeit I had spoken freely of myself and my past life, he had told me hardly aught of himself and nothing of his people or his home, which seemed all the more strange as he was of a frank and joyous nature, brave and true, and unless I was greatly mistaken had conceived as warm a regard for me as I had conceived for him. Not at all the sort of man to practise reserve out of suspicion or mistrust, or in pursuance of some deep laid design, I could only conclude that it was imposed on him from without, that he acted in obedience to some other will than his own, or possibly from a sense of duty.

Be that as it might Santleo had undoubtedly an imperative motive for his reticence, yet despite my ever growing curiosity on the subject I had no intention either of trying to surprise his secret or soliciting a confidence which he did not think fit to impart spontaneously. I should have to remain in the dark until time or circumstances unsealed his lips or otherwise unveiled the mystery.

These were my thoughts as I acted on my compadre's advice by changing my wet clothes for dry ones.

In our haste to escape from our pursuers we had boarded the nearest flechera, which happened to be the largest, and Bonanza's kit was in the other. But he was quite equal to the occasion. Doffing all his things he laid them in the bows to dry, covering himself meanwhile with a cobija, otherwise poncho capote, a large double blanket or rug, with a slit in the middle for the head, an indispensable necessity of South American travel.

Then he lighted a cigar, and looking at us with a highly amused expression broke into a laugh which lasted some time.

"Good, was not it? The best thing I've known for a long while," he exclaims at length, then laughs again.

"Since you say so I suppose it was," quoth I, "though 'pon my word I don't see where the fun came in. We were several times within an ace of being killed, and only escaped by the skin of our teeth. If you call that the best thing you have known for a long while I should like to know what is the worst."

"I was not thinking of our fight with the Godos, though it was so pleasantly exciting. I was thinking of that old traitor of an Alcalde taking me for Don Simon. That he should take you two, with your blue eyes, fair skins, and

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light hair, for Englishmen was natural. Nobody would take you for aught else, though Don Iago is a Creole. But to imagine I was the Supreme Chief! Ah! ah!"

"You feel flattered, I suppose?"

"Flattered? Did you ever see Bolivar?"

"No, that is a pleasure to come."

"Wait till you see him and then say whether you would feel flattered if you were taken for him. Look at me." Bonanza, who was a tall fellow and as vain as a peacock stretched himself to his full height. "Regard my legs" (tucking up his cobija). "Well, the Supreme Chief is quite little; his legs are like carrots, and when he has his boots on look for all the world like two candles in big sticks, while as for his face and mine—but wait till you see him. All the same"—here Bonanza became serious—"I would willingly exchange my physical advantages for his brains and tongue. There is not his equal in Venezuela for swaying a popular assembly, cajoling a man, or, though I say it myself, winning his way to the heart of a pretty woman."

"And is that a sort of thing to which Don Simon is given?"

"Well, they say that if he were as successful in war as he is in love he would never lose a battle, and he loses more than he wins."

"You had better not say that to anybody else, though, for if it came to his ears you would lose his favour, and I have heard that Bolivar never forgives," observed Don Iago.

"I have lost his favour already, else had I been a colonel by this time."

"How was that?"

"In this way. I was going down the Orinoco in a flechera with Don Simon and Colonel Hartado, a great favourite of his and an arrant boaster. He was always talking about himself and his exploits, protested that he cared neither for alligators nor Godos, and that he would swim through a river full of them without either hesitation or fear. Shortly afterwards the Chief wanted to land at a village and was put ashore in a canoe rowed by two Indians.

"Presently Hartado wanted to go also, and thinking it was a fine chance of putting his courage to the test, I had an understanding with the Indians, to whom I gave a little present, with the result that the canoe was accidentally capsized in a place where the river swarmed with caymanas (alligators).

"*Madre de Dios!* How Hartado yelled and swam. I never saw a man go through the water so fast in my life, and he was so frightened that when he landed he ran over so far on his hands and knees before he dared to get up and look behind him. As ill luck would have it, however, Bolivar saw it all and questioned the Indians, who let the cat out of the bag. He was angry and I got a good rating. What is worse, he has never forgiven me, and I shall never be promoted—by him."

"I am not surprised at Bolivar being angry. It was a very dangerous joke and might have cost both the colonel and the Indians their lives."

"Not at all. They righted the canoe in an instant, only Hartado was too scared to tarry. The danger was in his swimming ashore."

"What did he say?"

"Only that he yelled to frighten the caymanas, not out of fear. He was too mad to talk much."

"He was rightly served. But do you think you were wise in making an enemy of a man who has the Chief's ear?"

"I am not wise nor ever shall be. But I think I am rather clever in getting out of scrapes. Some of my friends are good enough to say that I have as many lives as a cat."

"And you would need to have considering the recklessness of your character and the nature of your country," I said laughing. "The rivers teem with alligators, caribe fish, and tembladores, the woods with snakes, tigers, scorpions, ticks, jiggers, and other insect abominations that suck your blood and spoil your rest. Then you have pirates, robbers, and a devastating war with enemies who give no quarter."

"So altogether you think Venezuela a good country to live out of," observed Santleo.

"I was speaking more in jest than in earnest. But if you put it in that way I should say that people who value their lives and study their comfort might, just now at least, find countries more to their taste."

"May I venture to ask you a question?"

"By all means. Ask away."

"Why, considering its present condition and other disadvantages, which I fully admit, did you come to Venezuela?"

"For several reasons. I am of a restless disposition and had nothing to do at home. I delight in adventure, sport, and active service, all of which I hoped to find here and have found; also I wanted to lend a hand in freeing South America from the yoke of Spain. For the rest, I don't set any great store by my life, and though I like comfort I can cheerfully dispense with it when needs must. Are you answered?"

"Perfectly, and I thank you for answering so frankly a question which I had no right to ask."

"Where no offence is meant none ought to be taken, and I hope you will not take it amiss if, having answered your question, I inquire why you left your native mountains, where, I suppose, peace reigns, to participate in this cruel war?"

"Yes, there is peace up there, and it is not likely to be disturbed. I quitted my native mountains in order to see something of the world and fight the Spaniards, though, as you say, it is a cruel war, and conducted in a way and a spirit which I little expected."

"If seeing the world be your object you should go further afield than Venezuela. If I keep my head on my shoulders and my throat from being cut for a twelvemonth I shall return to England after I have seen something of Central and North America and had a run through the United States. Why not come with me?"

Don Iago's eyes glistened and his manly face beamed with delight.

Bonanza lighted up a cigar, and broke into a laugh.

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"Yonder are the lights of San Fernando," he said pointing westward.

"If I could, if I would," he exclaimed. "To see England is the wish nearest my heart, and I would give—but no, it is impossible. I should have—I mean that I cannot, without good cause, leave Venezuela until the Spaniards are out of it."

"But the good cause arising you would accept my invitation?"

"Not even then, Señor Wyvenhoe, unless—but let us say no more about it. There is not greater folly than indulging in hopes that can never be realised. Rather let us talk about your ancestor who voyaged in these parts so long ago. Guyana, you say, he called them. I wonder what he thought of it and whether he was ever hereabouts."

Nothing I had told Santleo, not even my account of London and Paris, so interested him as the story of Gilbert Wyvenhoe's adventures to which he often recurred.

"I doubt whether he got so high as this, but the names in his narratives are so queerly spelt that I cannot be sure," I answered. "How he liked the country he does not in so many words (of which he was sparing) say. But he was uncommonly glad to get home again."

"It was strange he heard nothing more of his companions."

"Considering the time and the circumstances it would have been strange if he had heard."

"Where did they part?"

"At an Indian village in a great forest."

"That does not tell us much. The others may have gone on and found Manoah."

"Which, seeing there is no such place, would be stranger still."

"How know you there is no such place, Señor Wyvenhoe? Have your travels in this continent been so extensive that you know every corner of it?"

"I bow to your correction, my dear compadre. I ought to have said that I don't believe in the existence of El Dorado. A mighty city built of silver and gold and inhabited by a race of civilised aborigines belongs to the region of phantasy, not of fact."

"I daresay. All the same they might have lighted on some happy valley, a place where they could rest and be thankful and end their days in peace."

"Possibly, but I don't think so. I have always felt persuaded that these poor wanderers perished miserably, and now that I have seen the country for myself I feel sure of it."

Here Bonanza, who was a poor listener and could never hold his tongue for five consecutive minutes, broke in:

"You have the advantage over me in the matter of travel outside of South America, Señor Wyvenhoe, but I have travelled more in Venezuela than you have, and it is a better country than you think, though just now under a cloud. As yet you have seen the merest fringe of it. I have been told that there is no land either in the new world or the old which is posses-ed of a greater variety of climate, scenery, and sport.

"Wait till you have chased wild bulls and hunted tigers on the llanos; wait till you have ridden a charge with General Paez and his wild cavalry of the plains, seen the Andes, and tasted the delights of Caraccas, and you will admit that there are few finer countries than this, and no climate so delightful as that of our tierra templada. But discussion is not my *forte* and serious talk bores me. Let us have something to eat, fighting Godos and running away is appetising work."

Wherever else he might have been Bonanza was excellent company. Always in high spirits his incessant chatter, though occasionally tiresome, served to beguile the tedium of the way, and his jokes gave us many a hearty laugh.

Our recent experience had made us very cautious and very vigilant. Our weapons were always ready, we kept in the middle of the river, though there the current was strongest, landed always on the right bank, choosing our camping places with great circumspection, setting always a watch, which was relieved every two hours, and strictly forbidding the Indians to stroll into the forest. Fortunately the Spaniards had no armed boats on the river, and though we met and passed several piratical looking craft, we showed so bold a front that none of them ventured to attack us.

Ten days after leaving Angostura we entered the Apure, one of the most important affluents of the Orinoco, yet vastly smaller than the main stream. Yet the profusion of animal life was greater than aught I had yet beheld or thought possible.

Caymanas eighteen and twenty feet long basked in groups among the sedges on the banks, and the water was so thick with the loathsome creatures that the Indians were continually striking them with their paddles. Now and then we caught sight of tigers and leopards gliding between the trees or sunning themselves on the sands.

Birds of gorgeous plumage flitted from bough to bough, others flew over our heads in flocks so prodigious as to hide the sun, and the shores were peopled with a vast variety of aquatic birds, from the long-legged pelican and stately flamingo to the smallest crane.

The sight was superb, but owing to the meanderings of the stream and the want of wind our progress was painfully slow, and the insect pests, which are never so numerous and malignant as in the neighbourhood of water, made life a torment. They were, if possible, even worse in the smaller branches by which we had to pass in order to keep clear of the Spaniards and reach the village of Caujaral, on the Apure, where our water journey ended.

Hard by is the town of San Juan de Pallara, where we requisitioned horses for ourselves and mules for our baggage,

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and an hour before next day's dawn we set out for San Fernando, to which place, as we had heard, Bolivar was laying siege. We were also assured that, the enemy being on the other side of the river, the road was safe, but by way of providing for possibilities we took with us six Zambos, and Don Antonio, who knew the country, acted as guide.

For a few miles the road, which was not much broader than a cattle track, led through dense scrub, but soon the forest became more open, the trees wider apart, forming here and there grassy glades, in one of which we made our first halt.

"Does this please you better, Señor Wyvenhoe?" inquired Bonanza as we dismounted.

"Decidedly," said I. "Anything is better than those interminable rivers and impenetrable forests, and the back of a horse is far before the stern sheets of a flechera."

"You feel freer, eh? Don't need to sit with your legs doubled underneath you. *Caramba!* I have not got the stiffness out of my joints even yet. And there is no place where a man on a good horse feels so free as on the llanos, where we shall be before long. We are already on the edge of the great plain of Varinas, and before many days are past you will see some beautiful fighting. Paez is with the army, and there is not his equal in all Columbia for beating up the enemy's quarters."

Our halt was of the shortest, and we halted only twice more, being anxious to get to the camp before nightfall. In this, however, we were disappointed. The pack mules began to lag behind, and their speed had to be ours, so that we were in the dark two hours short of our destination.

Nevertheless we pushed on, Bonanza protesting that he could find the way by night as easily as by day. He rode first, we others following him in single file and close order, the darkness being so thick under the trees that we were unable to see each other, and could indeed hardly see our horses' heads.

I was next to him. After me came Don Iago, and John Ready and the Zambos brought up the rear. Our unshod horses stepped noiselessly. None of us spoke except when necessity required, and only in a whisper, lest we should be heard by some enemy coming in the opposite direction or lurking in the bushes.

We had been going in this fashion something more than an hour when Bonanza suddenly pulled up and passed the word to halt.

"Yonder are the lights of San Fernando," he said, pointing westward. "In a few minutes we shall see the patriot camp fires on both sides of the river, if they have crossed it, as no doubt they have."

This was good hearing, and deeming caution no longer imperative we began to talk again. The Zambos would have sung if they had not been stopped. But presently Don Antonio pulled up a second time.

"Halt, and for Heaven's sake silence!" he said in a hoarse whisper. He had been talking more loudly than any of us. "I see no sign of a camp, and if our people have retreated, and they would only retreat after losing a battle, we are marching slap into the lion's mouth. We can go little or no further either one way or the other. The mules are dead beat, the horses tired, and crossing the river before daylight is out of the question. What's to be done?"

"Dismount and stand by the horses till the moon rises," suggested Don Iago.

"The very thing," said I. "When the moon shows up we shall be able to see what we are about, and the horses, relieved of our weight, will get a little rest."

So all dismounted. The Zambos threw themselves on the ground, but I bade John keep on the alert, and we three leant against our saddles ready to mount at the first alarm.

In half-an-hour the moon rose grandly in a clear sky, giving so fair a light that we could make out San Fernando distinctly, a little walled town on a spit of land which projected into the river, with a background of thick forest; but the intervening country was comparatively open, and a few hundred paces ahead of us was a grove of palm trees.

"What next?" asked Bonanza. "If we go further we are pretty sure to fall in with one of the enemy's patrols, and I suppose you would not like to go back until we have ascertained what has become of the Chief and his army."

"Our business is to find the Chief and deliver our dispatches, and we must go where he is," I rejoined. "We will bivouac in that palm grove and question the first passer by. Failing that, surprise a picket, if we can light on one."

On which we advanced, leading our horses, and were within a short distance of the grove when a dozen or more dark forms came out of it, two on horseback, the others on foot.

Thinking boldness the best policy I gave the order to mount and prepare to charge.

"Who goes there?" demanded one of the strangers.

"*Amigos*," returned Don Antonio, riding fearlessly forward.

"Friends! That is all very well, but what are you—patriots or Godos?"

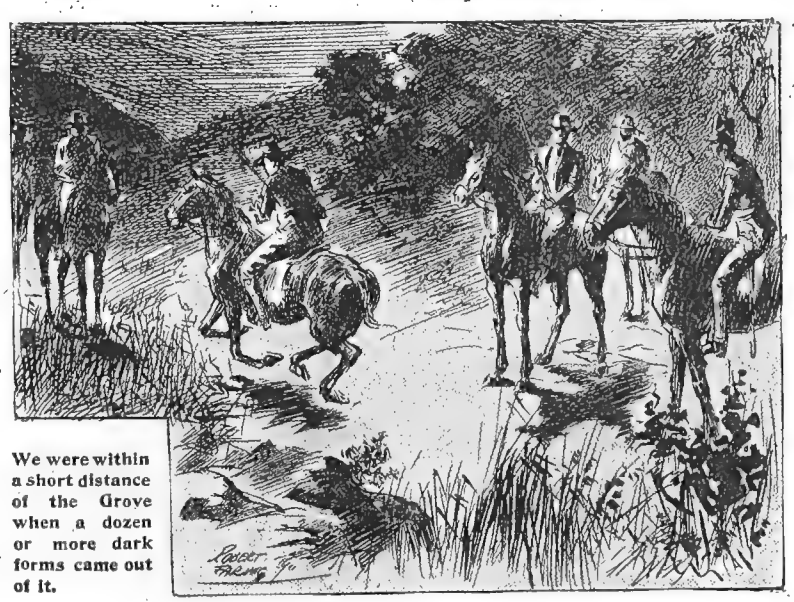
"It's all right," whispered Santleo. "Spaniards would neither call us patriots nor themselves Godos."

"Patriots, of course, and what are you?" replied and asked Bonanza.

"Also patriots—guerilleros."

"In that case you can perhaps tells us what has become of the patriot army? We were told that Don Simon was laying siege to San Fernando."

"So he meant to do and crossed the river with that intent, but hearing that Morillo was on the llanos he has gone to look for him. But they marched only a little while



We were within a short distance of the Grove when a dozen or more dark forms came out of it.

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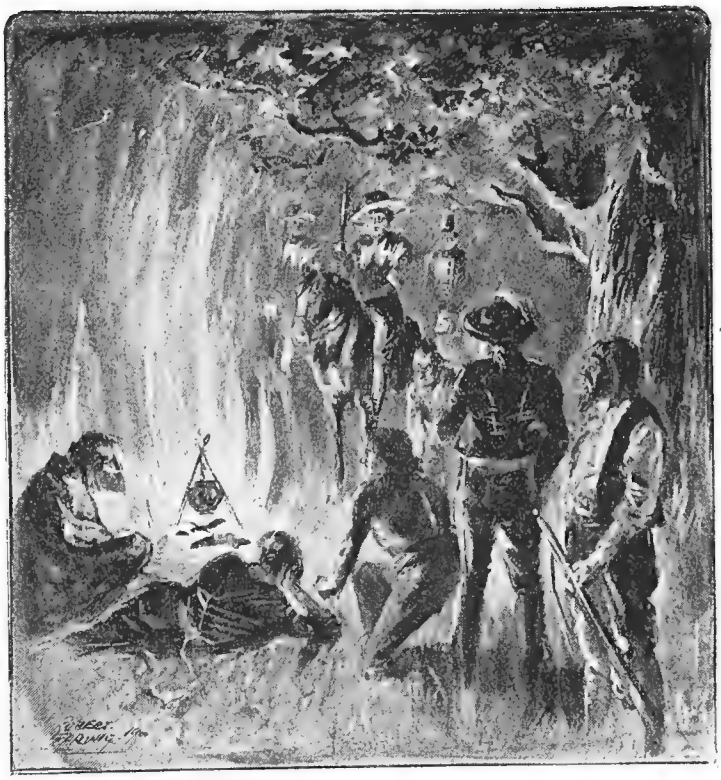

The speaker led the way to a glade where a big fire was burning.

before sunset, and if you start early in the morning on the Caliboza trail you can easily overtake them. Will you do us the favour to join our encampment?"

"What do you say?" asked Bonanza turning to me. "Guerillero generally means brigand. Most of them take whatever they can lay their hands on and regard murder as a pleasant form of excitement."

"Nevertheless, I think we shall have to trust these fellows. To refuse their hospitality would make enemies of them at once, and we must guard against treachery by keeping together and not sleeping all at a time. They don't seem much, if any, stronger than ourselves."

"But there may be more than we have seen. However, there seems to be no choice. The Señor Major accepts your kind offer with pleasure, Señor Caballero——"

"My name is Gonsalvo."

"Señor Don Gonsalvo, and we shall be happy to join your bivouac."

"*Gracias!* Have you aught to eat?"

"Some tasajo and cassava bread."

"To the devil with your tasajo. We have a fat buck, and shall be happy to share it with you. Some of my fellows are making a fire. Let us go."

Whereupon the speaker led the way to a glade where a big fire was blazing, by the light of which we were able to take stock of our entertainers, of whom there were twice as many as ourselves.

Don Gonsalvo, the chief, was a black of herculanean proportions. His followers were about the most villainous-looking collection of cut-throats I ever beheld—and I had seen a few in Spain and elsewhere—negroes, quadroons, mulattoes, Zambos, and Indians, each more ill-favoured than the other, and only one white face amongst them. All were armed to the teeth. As for clothing, some wore Spanish uniforms, others the ordinary shirt and trousers, several a shirt only, and a few wore next to nothing.

That they would murder us if they could take us unawares I had no doubt whatever; but as we were as well armed as themselves and on our guard I did not think they were likely to make the attempt, and said so to Don Iago.

"You are quite right. Guerilleros only go in for hard fighting when they are cornered. I have no fear of their falling on us during the night unless we fall asleep. That is not the danger."

"What is, then?"

"Betrayal. I think Gonsalvo means honestly, otherwise he would have waited until we entered the grove and there attacked us. But in a band like this there is sure to be at least one Judas. San Fernando is less than an hour's walk away, and nothing would be easier than to sell us to the Spaniards."

"That is true, but as we cannot make a move before morning we must just take the risk and trust to Providence."

"Also keep a sharp look out. In my opinion the most likely of them to play the traitor is that white fellow in uniform. He looks like a soldier, and is probably a Spanish deserter. By betraying us he could both obtain immunity for his offence and a handsome reward. I'll speak to Diego."

Diego was the best of our Zambos, a wonderful tracker, as keen as a sleuthhound and as strong as a bull-fighter.

"What have you told Diego?" I asked.

"To keep an eye on that white-faced chap, and if he slips away to follow him."

*(To be continued.)*

BIBLIOTECA·BODLEIANA

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# SHORT STORIES ABOUT POLICEMEN.

**We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "The Iron Cross," by R. H. Sherard, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. E. Holdsworth, 11 Baxendall Street, Bradford. Attempts this week must deal with Stories about RAILWAY TRAINS, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, September 24th. Post-cards only, please.**

## In Disguise.

ON the occasion of the annual flower show at a certain town some members of the county police were drafted from the neighbouring villages on account of the large number of pickpockets who annually visit the show.

One elderly constable wore his regulation boots and ordinary policeman's trousers, but had donned a small cap in place of his helmet, and a small covert coat over his tunic. This coat was much too short, and the tails of the tunic hung down some way below it. Altogether he presented a most ludicrous appearance.

As he stood apart from the crowd, intently watching, a lady, to whom he was well-known, approached him, and asked him to direct her to a certain part of the show.

He thereupon drew himself up, and in a most awe-inspiring manner said:

"Hush, hush, Mrs. Tompkins. Don't speak to me now. I'm on detective duty." E. H.

## One Way of Dispersing a Mob.

A POLICEMAN hailing from the granite city lately made application for a similar situation in the Leeds City Police Force.

The superintendent was examining him on his knowledge of police duty.

"In the event of your having to disperse a mob, how would you use your baton?"

"Oh, sir, we never used a baton for that purpose in Aberdeen. When we wanted to skaill a mob there, we jist pat roon the hat an' askit a collection."

J. B. C.

## A Gallant Rescue.

ONE very foggy night last November, a policeman in a quiet suburb of a town not far from Windsor, was engaged in a desperate struggle with two ruffians, whom he found attempting to rob an old lady.

Her piercing shrieks, and the shouts of "Help! in the Queen's name!" brought a passing rustic to the spot, and so valiantly did he perform that the would-be thieves were soon both secured.

The voluble thanks of the old lady and Robert were cut short by the remark:

"Don't mention it, yer Majesty. Thank heaven, I've helped ter save yer from them durned Acanhists."

And the honest fellow really seemed disappointed when he found that it was not his Sovereign whom his gallantry had rescued.

P. M. P.

## The Cyclist Scored.

A PORTION of the main road from Manchester to Swinton is very rough and lumpy on one side, while the other side has a very fair surface.

On a recent occasion, there being no other traffic about, a cyclist, who was riding on his wrong side to get the advantage of the good surface, was accosted by a policeman who demanded to know why he was on that side of the road.

"Oh," said the cyclist smiling, "I just came across to answer your silly questions," and the laugh that went up from the bystanders told the man in blue that for once the cyclist had scored. F. D. H.

## A Sell for the "Bobby."

IT was in the time of the dog muzzling days.

A young lady was seen by a policeman to be carrying a little pet dog in her arms, which was without a muzzle.

The policeman went up to her and said:

"It is my dooty, ma'am, to take that dog in charge for not havin' a muzzle on."

"Oh," said the lady, "but it won't bite or hurt anyone."

"It's the lor, ma'am," said the man in blue.

Reluctantly the lady gave the policeman her dog, and passed on, leaving the astounded "bobby" with a toy poodle on wheels in his arms!

E. B.

## He Performed His Duty.

A YOUNG fellow, standing six feet two inches in height, joined the police force of his native town. At the end of his first day as a constable he dressed in mufti, and walked up to the top of the town to see his chums.

Presently the latter began to play leap-frog in the street, thereby obstructing the thoroughfare, and the new constable joined in with zest.

Suddenly a cry of "Stop!" was raised, and the players fled as the constable on the beat was seen approaching, among the first to run being the new constable.

When they got safely away, one of the players, in sudden recollection, exclaimed:

"Why, Dai, you're a bobby, too!"

Dai was thunderstruck.

"Why!" he gasped, slapping his thigh, "so I am. I've got to arrest you!"

Which he promptly did! W. J. O.

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### He Called the Police.

AT a certain draper's shop in the vicinity of Drury Lane they keep a small boy to run errands.

The other day a young lady came in and asked the shop assistant for a yard of silk. When it was placed in front of her she explained:

"Oh, really, I must be mad! I want muslin."

Hearing this, the boy rushed out of the shop, and, seeing a policeman across the road, ran up to him and shouted excitedly:

"Hi! come over to our shop, quick; there's a gal in there what's gone mad and wants muzzling!"

W. L.

### The Sailor's Ruse.

ONE day this summer a policeman on duty near the Customs Offices at one of our southern ports was accosted by an officer from a ship that had just arrived.

The sailor, who carried a parcel in his hand, slipped a 5s. piece into the policeman's palm, with the words:

"I am going to bring some tobacco ashore to-morrow night, so don't take any notice of me then."

The bobby pocketed the coin, but next evening, as the sailor appeared with a parcel under his arm, he stopped him, took him into the Customs Office, and had him searched and his parcel examined.

Great was the policeman's disgust to find nothing on which duty could be charged. He had let the tobacco pass on the previous night!

S. J. B.

### Wanted the Quid.

A CONCEITED cyclist, finding his machine was out of order, dismounted by the roadside in order to adjust the bearings, and seeing a country policeman near by he summoned him to his aid.

"Render me some little assistance in the adjustment of my machine, my good fellow," he grandiloquently remarked, "and I will see that you have a *quid pro quo*."

"Robert" scratched his head and assumed a puzzled air.

"If it don't mak' any difference to you, guv'nor," he sagely observed, "we'll say nowt about the *pro quo*, but I don't mind takkin' the quid, though, an' thank yer!"

W. C.

### Why the Case was Dismissed.

A MAN was charged in the North with catching a fish that weighed less than two pounds.

The constable who made the arrest testified to arresting the prisoner with the fish in his possession.

"Where is the fish?" asked the lawyer for the defendant.

"Why, it wouldn't keep," answered the officer.

"What did you do with it?"

"Oh, I disposed of it."

"What did you do with it?"

"Well, I knew it wouldn't keep, so I disposed of it."

"But what did you do with it?"

"My wife cooked it."

"And you ate it?"

"Yes, your honour."

The case was dismissed on the grounds that the arresting officer "ate the evidence."

J. H.

### "What's Up?"

HE was a stout, middle-aged member of the force, his number X 94, and his beat the busiest street in the town.

It was evening, and as he pursued his not very rapid way, thinking of nothing particular (for the wife of his bosom had been a cook, and he was supplied with every dainty he could desire), a slight touch on the sleeve of his official coat made him turn to see what was up.

It was a young lady, evidently in distress, but well-attired. She spoke not, but made movements with her fingers, to him unintelligible.

"What's up?" he asked.

But no reply came, save an increased motion of the digits. His official mind was puzzled. He took off his helmet, replaced it, pondered, and then the idea came that she was a deaf mute.

A crowd had collected, and were asking each other, "What's up?" Could he find help there?

Happy thought!

"Is there any of you here," he exclaimed, "that's deaf and dumb, and can tell what's up, for I'm blest if I can."

J. T. M.


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# COOLIE-LI.

## THE STORY OF THE ADOPTED ONE.

### THE PROLOGUE.

MORE than forty years ago, there dwelt in the city of Pekin an old Chinaman, by name Wung-Fu.

Where the street of "The Lantern-Makers" abuts upon the covered passage running round the inclosed Joss-House of "The Golden Dragon," stood a little dilapidated lean-to tenement, within the shelter of which lived Wung-Fu and his grandchild, the boy Oh-Sung. The old man's record was open to adverse criticism, inasmuch as in his palmy days he had been more than shrewdly suspected of piracy.

This suspicion, however, went but little in his disfavour with those amongst whom he neighboured. Many, indeed, admired him for his past deeds in the piratical way, for were they not here and there themselves more or less tainted with the same incriminatory perfume.

But Wung-Fu was now old, and worn, and nearly blind. Scarce a body-and-soul existence could he, howsoever painfully, scrape together for himself and the only being left to him since the scourge of the "Black Death" five years before.

Oh-Sung was not a lovable boy. There were indications to the ear, if not to the sightless eyes of his grandfather, that the lad was rapidly developing a selfish, cruel spirit. This, to one of old Wung-Fu's antecedents, might naturally be thought not to have been of much moment, would, in fact, be in full harmony with his own ideas and bent of mind.

But human nature, especially Chinese human nature, is complex and inexplicable. Wung-Fu bitterly resented this early warping of his grandson's disposition. Whether himself having greater leisure for repentant broodings, or whether he had come to believe in respectability and moral virtue as things to be desired to make one wise, no man knoweth.

Certain it is that Oh-Sung came in, not unfrequently, for the thick end of his grandsire's bamboo, much mortification of the flesh thereby ensuing, together with the ignition of a slow, smouldering, vengeful flame. Then there came a day when in the little house food and firing were not.

It was winter.

On a ragged straw mat in a corner of the hut, without covering of any kind, lay old Wung-Fu. A few hours would see the end.

Every now and then, cunningly curious, nothing more, would Oh-Sung peer silently through the doorless entrance in upon the dying man, and then as silently return to his playmates, the juvenile idlers of the street.

Clang! Boom! Clang! Boom!

A mandarin, or maybe the viceroy himself, the focus of a deafening chorus of men's voices and torturous instruments, is approaching along the route of the street of "The Lantern-Makers."

The boys, Oh-Sung in the van, hurry to the spectacle, heedless of the thwacks and hustling of guards and policemen.

Suddenly the great man calls a halt, imperiously beckoning to Oh-Sung to come near to him. He was a finely-made, well set-up, taking lad; the peculiar expression of his eyes, to the superficial observer, detracting in no way from his general beauty and charm.

"Your father, boy, who is he?"

Oh-Sung, too terrified to speak in such a presence, cast down his eyes, and thought only of how to escape. From the outer fringe of the crowd the reply is forthcoming.

"The boy Oh-Sung is the last left to the old Wung-Fu."

Two of the guards drag the speaker forward to the official chair.

"Where lives the old Wung Fu?" came the swift, sharp query.

"Honourable Excellence! Your abased slave will guide you thither; 'tis but a step."

A few bustling minutes, and the boy Oh-Sung, has been bought and adopted by his Excellency, the Viceroy of the Province. Half-an-hour after the consummation of the contract, old Wung-Fu departed this life to join the shades of his ancestors, and Oh-Sung, now, by Vice-regal command to be henceforth known as Li-Sung, set out with joyous anticipation for the unknown fairyland of the Yamen of the favourite of the "Son of Heaven."

* * * * *

It is the present year of grace, 1900.

A small sampan is rocking gently on the swell of the bay. Seated in its after part, lazily manipulating a scull with just sufficient motion to keep the little craft's head to wind, is a man, naked to the waist.

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He is brown from exposure, and apparently fifty years old. He wears no hat, his cue being wound round his head in the orthodox Chinese fashion.

He appears to notice nothing, waterward or skyward, and yet, were you close enough to him you might observe ever and again a furtively keen glance in the direction of the Ly-ee-moon Pass. He must be a patient man, for he has been upon the spot since sunrise, and now it is long past the meridian.

Suddenly a dull booming roar breaks the silence, reverberating from hill-top to hill-top. Evidently interested, the sampan's owner assumes the alert, sits upright, and with a few strong, rapid strokes impels the tiny boat towards the source of the echo which still trembles on the air.

Her Britannic Majesty's ship *Nelson,* flying the Rear-Admiral's flag emerges from the Pass, and with another thunderous salute, makes for her berth, and is soon at anchor.

No one on board appears to trouble about a sampan which a half-naked Chinaman keeps well in the shadow of the big warship. At length, seemingly satisfied, the occupant puts way upon his little craft and heads for the shore.

That night the innermost and evilest recesses of Tai-Ping-Shan, Hong Kong's native quarter, are a-hum with the low mutterings of a thousand tongues.

Men in groups, men in twos and threes eagerly chatter and gesticulate. Sinister-looking men, truculent, dangerous, ready for murder, rapine, and a wholesale committal of the seven deadly sins. One man in particular moves swiftly and silently from street to street, and from group to group, whispering here, impressing there, with words which seem to burn wherever they are dropped.

This man, though clothed in native dress, is unmistakably him of the sampan. The face alone would identify him. Cruel eyes, set wider apart than is usual with the average Celestial; high cheek-bones, and a complexion burnt to blackness with the winds and suns of more than forty years.

You may hear following him such remarks as: "Coolie-Li, he savvey, trick foleign devil; Coolie-Li no fool! Englishman come; Coolie-Li alle same cut him throat."

For days the British authorities at Victoria had suspected Boxer gatherings and secret society mischief generally as being rife in Tai-Ping-Shan, but although alarming rumours had reached Government House of dark deeds done in Pekin and Tientsin, of ministers and their families slaughtered, and of unrelateable horrors committed in the name of the "Red Dragon," it was deemed improbable that any serious Boxer rising would take place in Hong Kong itself.

True, there was a story afloat, traceable to one Ho-Shan, a shifty, wily ship's "comprador," that a dangerous member of the Boxer Society, one of its chiefs, in fact, was in the town, upon revolutionary propaganda intent.

This man, it was said, owing to his working occasionally as a common coolie, now in this port, now in that, had come to be known in certain circles as Coolie-Li.

Undoubtedly there was a mystery with regard to him. Some averred that he was no better than that which he sometimes pretended to be; others insisting that in some way he was closely connected either by blood or by adoption with a certain great Imperial functionary. Anyway, sharp English eyes, both ashore and afloat, were on the watch for him.

The next evening but one after her arrival H. M. S. *Nelson* lay peacefully at anchor. Save and except for the periodical hoarse interchange of challenge and reply, complete silence reigned on deck from taffrail to knightheads.

Commander Blake sits in his cabin, on the *qui vive* certainly, but at the same time comfortably assured that the ship is ready for "business" at a moment's notice.

Right aft, on the starboard side, a midshipman leans upon the rail looking across at the lights which dot, fire-fly-fashion, the town and hill above it.

Sound upon the water there is none, only the monotonously pleasant lap-lapping against the ship's side.

About "three bells" the middy fancied he could detect a slight grating noise, and a man's heavy, laboured breathing on the port quarter.

Regulations or no regulations he would go over and find out. When within a yard of the rail he saw distinctly a man's ten yellow fingers spread eagle-wise upon its broad flat top, preparatory evidently to a spring-up on to the deck.

The budding young sailor was, though small for his years, a veritable little hero. Knowing that such a digital display boded no good, could indeed have but a nefarious significance, the ship's cutlass at his side was in a flash, in his hand, and brought down with all his boyish force upon the extended fingers.

A yell! a splash! and a sampan, bottom up, floating away to the southward told the truth of the tale, while, most condemning evidence of all as to criminal purpose, lay, bloody, upon the rail-top the four severed yellow fingers of a man's hand.

Hastily summoned upon deck, the Commander listened to the middy's story, as a consequence ordering a stricter watch to be kept through the remainder of the night.

Two days passed without a sign. On the third day Commander Blake took a day's leave. Before quitting the ship he was warned by his superior officers of possible trouble ahead, impressing upon him the absolute necessity for keeping, during his stay in the town, altogether to the European quarter. Blake, somewhat resentful of interference with his movements, departed in one the ship's boats.

Twenty-four hours—forty-eight hours—three days! but no Commander. Then was a search-party organised on the morning of the fourth day. The town was scoured from end to end without result. There remained only the worst portion of the native quarter, Tai-Ping-Shan. The exploration of this foul centre of native life, this cluster of gambling hells and opium dens, was, indeed, a forlorn hope. Still it must be made. Securing an access of military strength from the barracks, the little force marched resolutely through the dirty, narrow streets, into the very hub of the place.

The streets themselves were quiet, almost to absolute desertion, but from doorway and window yellow faces looked out, scowling hatred and contempt upon the foreign devils. Half-an-hour of this and the officer in command gave up all hope.

Then they came to a dark, tortuous alley, entrance to which was through a ruinous archway at the head of a short flight of rickety steps. The side-posts of the arch, as was the rough carving over the top, were painted a blood-red, while dependent from the centre hung a large paper lantern of grotesque form, and of the same colour.

One of the *Nelson's* men in advance of the rest quickened his pace.

"There's something lying along the top of those

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steps!" he suddenly exclaimed, pointing his finger towards the dimly-lit spot.

Springing excitedly up the rotten stairway, he saw at once that the search was over. Upon his back, his right arm by his side, the hand holding his cap, lay the hapless Commander. Closer scrutiny revealed a knife, buried to the haft in the dead man's left breast, the weapon serving also to pin down a small black sheet of paper, inscribed with Chinese characters in red.

The houses in the alley appeared to be deserted, so that no arrests or reprisals were possible.

Carrying the body to the ship, a report was presented to the Admiral, who in his turn communicated the matter to the Governor, and for the moment the affair was at an end.

Strong convictions prevailed, however, in official circles that this was something more than the outcome of mere personal revenge.

The middy's story had circulated freely, and English eyes were keenly on the look-out for a Chinaman minus the fingers of his left hand.

Interest in Coolie-Li, as being, if not the actual perpetrator of the outrage, in all probability its instigator, increased hourly. So matters stood when notification of the impending visit to Hong Kong of His Excellency Li-Hung-Chang was received at Government House.

The old dabbler in chicanery and the devious ways of Celestial diplomacy was on his way to Pekin, at the command of and to join the Empress Mother.

In Hong Kong he was no welcome guest, for confidence in his integrity had long been banished from the Western mind.

With the announcement of his almost immediate arrival, there was also a private intimation to the Governor that business of an important personal nature might render the co-operation of the latter necessary.

The Governor, good, easy man, was singularly single-hearted, and, Briton-wise, impatient of mystery and implied deceit, groaned in the spirit in anticipation of coming unpleasantness and political complication.

On board the *Nelson* no expectation existed of another visit from either the "man of the sampan" or of his fellow miscreants. But in China it is as well not to reason from analogy.

The evening of the day before Li-Hung-Chang's advent was sultry almost beyond precedent. About four bells a thunder-storm of exceptional severity broke over sea and land.

It was at the height of the tempest that the sentry forward made out five or six large river or "slipper" boats heading for the *Nelson's* port quarter. In the van a small sampan, sculled by one man, naked to the waist, with his right hand only, seemed alike guiding and rallying point.

In a moment the ship was alive from stem to stern; men sprang to quarters, and the oncoming boats, crowded with men who saw their enterprise defeated, went about in a body and swiftly made for the shore. The man in the sampan in vain endeavoured to inspire his confederates with his own spirit, but to attempt to attack a British man-of-war ready at all points to receive them was an absurdity evident even to their limited understanding.

Then occurred a strange thing.

Among the men upon the *Nelson's* deck was the one who had discovered the Commander's body in the native town, and who had been that officer's servant and orderly. Regardless of consequences and of service regulations, he now cast the end of a rope overboard, and, making the in-board end fast, swarmed down it to the surface of the water.

The sampan-man was now within a few yards of the ship, and the sailor, hoping to reach him before he himself was observed, struck out for the little craft. It so happened that, as he kicked himself free from the *Nelson's* side, the Chinaman saw him. With two mighty strokes the sailor reached the boat, the gunwale of which he grasped with one hand. Down into his face grinned the diabolical eyes of the other.

A knife between his teeth, upon the bright blade of which played occasional flashes of lightning, he appeared the very incarnation of devilry and death.

Not one whit dismayed, the sailor tried to raise himself out of the water. The Chinaman, dropping his scull, sprang at his enemy's throat, to force him back. But the little boat was unequal to the strain. As the Celestial reached out towards the sailor, the latter flung up his left hand, and with a supreme effort dragged the other to him by his loin-cloth.

In a second the two men were in the water. It was then that the plucky tar first noticed the bound-up left hand of his antagonist.

"By Jove!" he cried exultantly, and tightening his grip. "I've been looking for you, my chap! No, you don't!" as the other sought to slip eel-wise from his grasp. "Ahoy! deck ahoy! on deck there!"

Knowing the fate in store for him should he be captured, the Chinaman shook himself free, and taking a leaf out of the book of his prototype the shark, turned suddenly upon his back, with his knife in his hand diving dexterously under his foe.

The fatal upward stroke was made just as the ship's cutter reached the spot, and when lifted exhausted into the boat, Coolie-Li saw that the sailor lay in the stern-sheets white and still, he smiled, the smile of one who had offered a grateful sacrifice to the dark nature of his tutelary deity.

The next day the Viceroy on arrival was informed of the incident of the night before.

"Let me see the prisoner, if I may," said Li.

There being no reason for objection, the Governor consented. The interview took place on board the *Nelson* in the doctor's cabin, that being the only available place for such a purpose.

"I would speak in private with this man," said the Viceroy.

Ten minutes, fifteen minutes, and then a smothered laugh from within. A gentle opening of the cabin door, and the old statesman stands upon the threshold, a half smile playing about his lips.

But the prisoner! Where is he? An open port answers the question.

Li-Hung-Chang revealed nothing, and it is currently reported to-day among the English in Hong Kong that there was beyond doubt some truth in the story of the connection between the great Li and the lesser; and that not only for the sake of that adoptive relation, but from actual sympathy with the revolutionary principles of the "adopted one," he, the shadow of the "Son of Heaven," had allowed the murderer to escape the retributive justice of the foreign devil.

* * * * * *

Dr. Frank Nairn, R. N., has upon a shelf in his cabin on board the *Nelson* a fair-sized phial containing, spirit-preserved, four severed yellow, shrivelled human fingers. The good doctor will, when in the vein, expatiate upon their history, and offer them for the inspection of the curious.

RALPH ENDERBY.

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# TRICKING THE EGYPTIANS.

When the firm of Heywood, Stone and Co., of London, established an agency at Cairo, Egypt, I was placed in charge. My business was the buying of rugs, vases, arms, cloths and whatever else might find sale in England. That was what I may call my general and legitimate business. As a side line I was to pick up bargains in mummies. Up to the founding of that agency in Cairo, only a few museums in Europe had been able to secure specimens. To get hold of a mummy with a history required a couple of years diplomatic correspondence between Governments, and the cost would run up as high as £5,000.

Under the laws of Egypt it was death to disturb the dead without official permission, and death to any foreigner discovered trying to ship a mummy out of the country without special license. In justice to the old and respectable house I have named I must say that they had no knowledge of my side line.

I had a partner in London who advanced the money and shared the profits. When I was ready to begin business, we had orders for thirty mummies.

Let me tell you that I had a crafty part to play. In a way the branch was under the supervision of the Egyptian Government. At the end of each week I had to submit a list of my purchases. All my shipments had to pass the Customs officials. My ware-rooms must always be open to official inspection. I was not told in so many words that all this watchfulness was to prevent me from dealing in mummies, but I knew that it was.

My first step was to bribe every official who could obstruct me, and I had to move slowly in the matter and make no mistakes. Then an agent must be found to look up and ship me the specimens from points in the interior, and he had to be a man without fear, as well as an honest man. He in turn would have to find faithful men, and, taken altogether, it was a bit of business to be handled with care. It was six months before I got it under way, and after once fairly in it there was not an hour in which I felt safe from discovery.

In most cases the burial places in Egypt are easily to be got at. Most of our orders simply called for a specimen, and it made no difference about the sex or whether there was a record attached. There were a few museums in want of particular bodies. They wanted kings, queens, generals, or poets who had been dead from 3,000 to 5,000 years. It is perhaps unnecessary to inform the reader that I always executed these orders.

After getting a mummy into my warehouse I had a way of making it fill the bill and give general satisfaction. My assistant, who was a native antiquary, a native doctor and a villain, was handy at unwrapping and rewrapping and carving hieroglyphics and manufacturing relics. If there was fraud in it, I do not seek to defend myself. I simply say that if there is a public demand for the mummy of Pharaoh it is the duty of some agent to supply it as near as possible and keep people good natured.

In the course of two years I shipped fifty-six mummies safely out of Cairo and landed them in London, and I am frank to say that my dividends were considerably larger than those paid last year by the London and North-Western Railway.

The mummy business was booming, and I was executing orders for anything up to 10,000 years old on demand when a Government official gave me a hint that my business had been found out. He exchanged his information for my five-pound note and went his way.

I don't know that anyone had given me away directly, but suspicion had somehow become aroused, and I was to be put under surveillance and caught red-handed. My shipments suddenly ceased, and the mummy market became dull.

After a couple of weeks my assistant villian went up the Nile towards the ruins of Memphis to look for a man. It was a live man and a particular sort of man he wanted, and when he found him the sum of ten pounds changed hands.

Then the man died. At least he was swathed in

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bandages which had come from the looms 2,000 years before, scented and spiced in A1 style and then put in a coffin which gave him away as having been dead almost twenty centuries.

The hieroglyphics on that coffin and on a manuscript inclosed revealed the fact that the dead man was the celebrated fakir Sonadi Hassassan, and that when he had slept his sleep he would awaken and begin another pilgrimage on earth.

The mummy reached my warehouse one afternoon, and within an hour a Government official, backed by a file of soldiers, had arrived to make a search. There had been no concealment. The mummy occupied a conspicuous position. They had caught me red-handed in a way, and yet they could not understand why I had been so open about it.

"My dear sir," I said to the official, "I know the laws of Egypt. I am not dealing in mummies. The law does not say I may not restore a dead man to life. At this present hour that thing there is a mummy. To-night at nine o'clock it will be a living man."

"What nonsense is this?" exclaimed the man as he struck the coffin with his cane. "Do you think I am a child to believe such tales?"

"I think you are a very smart man," I replied. "But there is yet something to learn. Read of Sonadi Hassassan. He was the greatest magician the world ever knew. He it was who made the Nile flow backwards for a day. When he had lived for 1,000 years, he became weary for the want of sleep. He fell into a trance which was not to be broken for 2,000 years. The time is up at nine o'clock to-night."

"And he will come back to life?" queried the man, with an incredulous smile.

"He will. You and your friends will be here to see. I had read of him, and I was anxious to get his body. I paid a large price for it that I may see it restored to life with my own eyes."

The Egyptian's natural superstition and my earnestness staggered the man, and when I saw it I clinched the matter by saying:

"It is only a few hours to wait. You shall dine with me at eight o'clock. At nine my assistant shall unwrap Hassassan and bring him to life. Let two of your soldiers watch the coffin meanwhile. If things don't turn out as I say, you shall carry me off prisoner and have £20 in gold as a present."

"So be it," he said after a long look at me, "but do not attempt to trick me, I am no fool."

Two soldiers were left to watch the coffin, and in my hearing he warned them that any remissness on their part would be followed by swift punishment.

My living rooms were over the warehouse. When the dinner hour arrived, I had the official and two of his friends to sit down with me. All three of the men had made up their minds that I was playing a game of bluff, and they were curious to know how I was going to carry it through. Five pounds would have bribed any of them to shut his eyes for a year, but in this case they had received their orders direct from the Minister and dared not trifle with him.

They drank sparingly of the wine that they might keep their heads clear, but grew sufficiently good-natured to hope that I might get out of the trouble without serious loss.

"There will be no trouble," I replied, with calm assurance. "Sonadi Hassassan has had his sleep and will return to life, and the Government will probably reward me for restoring such a celebrated man to earth. Come, gentlemen, it is time."

The soldiers had been sitting before the coffin for hours. My assistant was at hand and ready, and we lost no time in getting to work.

The coffin was tilted up on end, the body lifted forward so that it could be got at, and the wraps were soon removed.

I knew that the mummy was a live man, but never had I looked upon the face of a subject showing death and the passage of time more plainly. The face would have deceived the wisest professor in Europe.

There were the sunken eyes and cheeks, the loss of teeth and the seal brown colour, and I found myself wondering if some mistake hadn't been made. The official and his friend quietly chuckled as the business proceeded, and my assistant villain was the only one who was perfectly placid.

He did not hurry his work. He was a full half-hour getting down to the last wrapping, which was a sort of union garment made for the occasion. Then he stepped back with a flourish, picked up a stick, and, striking three blows on the coffin, he called out:

"It is time, Sonadi Hassassan; it is time!"

The chest of the mummy began to heave and its eyes to flutter. Then came a long breath and its eyes unclosed.

The soldiers bolted from the warehouse in affright, and the three men retreated several paces in consternation.

Very slowly and without a false motion the mummy gasped and stretched and looked about. A hand went up to rub sleep from its eyes. Then it moved uneasily, and presently stepped from the coffin, straightened up, and passed out of the door into the night with slow and dignified steps.

"Well?" I queried as I turned to the dumfounded trio.

They stood staring with open mouths, and I had to put hands on them before they came back to earth.

"Did I not tell you so? Did I not say that after a sleep of 2,000 years the great magician would return to life?"

They did not answer, but with pale faces and chattering teeth they tottered out into the darkness with a mighty fear upon them.

I had the agency for two years longer, and there was a continuous boom in the mummy market, but after that incident there was never an official inspection of my stock. The officials could not have been hired for money to poke about in the dark corners.

C. B. Lewis.


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Full particulars have already appeared, and will appear again shortly. They also appear in the current issue of

*THE CURIOSITY SHOP.*

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# A YACHTSMAN'S ROMANCE.

THE London season was over, and a considerable number of its late celebrities were collected in various pleasant spots closely contiguous to the waters of the Solent. Blighted beings had repaired to Cowes, and shattered hearts to Ryde. Gentlemen who were, in popular parlance, about "done up," were enjoying themselves with a hilarity that might have betokened the zenith of worldly prosperity and commercial success, in different crafts belonging to the pleasure fleet which covers the English Channel with animation during the months of July, August and September.

The scene is Ryde Pier, and the hour about 7.30 p.m. A pretty spot, and by no means an unfavourable hour for visiting it. Like Melrose, Ryde Pier and the view it presents may be visited with signal propriety by the pale moonlight or in the pale twilight.

The eternal promenade on the pier-head, the perpetual accompaniment of brilliant music and interminable scandal, the ceaseless tide of demonstrative flirtation—these things are pleasant enough *per se*, but they have, no doubt, a tendency to become monotonous. It is a very different thing, Ryde Pier after dinner. You can secure society without crowd and company without effort. You may meditate *solus*, or *solus cum solâ* you may flirt. And the prospect is not without its charm. There in the Solent is the squadron of dainty craft, their sails furled, still and motionless at anchor, the lamp fixed to their mastheads reflecting itself with a quivering motion in the tide below; and the whole effect being that of a marine illumination. A little further on, and you can see the line of light on the mainland and distinctly trace the terraces of Southsea and Portsmouth. If you turn round you will see full in your face the little town of Ryde alive with gas and the windows of the Victoria Yacht Club all aglow.

Mr. Jim Lawlesse, to address him at once by his familiar title, was scarcely a gentleman of a poetic temperament, yet from the prolonged intentness of his gaze upon the waters as he lounged across the railings of the pier, and the fact that he had suffered his cigar to become extinguished in his hand, he might, for all one could have told to the contrary, been meditating a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, or be speculating deeply on the philosophy of the unconditioned.

Of that little yacht yonder, the one nearest the shore, with its tiny light twinkling from amid its rigging—the *Sea Fan* was her name—Mr. Jim Lawlesse was temporary proprietor.

Jim's friends were in the habit of saying that, having made the land too hot for him, he had taken to the waters; and there may have been reasons which rendered St. James's Street a slightly too public place for our hero. So Mr. Lawlesse had accepted an invitation from an old college friend to go on a yachting trip in the *Sea Fan*. But the *Sea Fan's* owner had been called away, and Mr. Lawlesse was the man in possession for the time being.

A boat containing a gentleman and two ladies pulled up to the pier, and Mr. Lawlesse's attention was aroused. The party had come from the *Petrel*, about a mile out, and consisted of the proprietor of the *Petrel*, Sir Hedworth Dare, and his two daughters, who stood to each other in the relation of step-sisters, as Sir Hedworth had married twice, Edith and Kate. When Mr. Lawlesse went up to the two as they landed it was pretty obvious that Sir Hedworth Dare would have been quite as well pleased had that gentleman not chosen to present himself; for the baronet regarded Mr. Lawlesse as a detrimental, and had a wholesome and parental horror of the class.

"Ah! Lawlesse; thought it was Moonington," said Sir Hedworth, "said he would be here to meet us."

The Hon. Sam Moonington was the eldest son of the heir of Moonshine, and desperately smitten with Miss Kate Dare. Sir Hedworth—so said Ryde society—was bent upon the match.

The Hon. Sam was certainly a catch; so said the ladies; Moonington was an ass; so (somewhat abruptly) said the gentlemen in general, and Mr. Lawlesse in particular.

Jim, however, was not to be taken aback by this very tepid welcome, and walked down the pier with Sir Hedworth and his two daughters.

"Are you going to the ball to-night, Mr. Lawlesse?" asked Kate Dare.

It happened to be within a few hours of the commencement of the Yacht Club Ball.

Of course Mr. Lawlesse was going; and so was Mr. Moonington—that gentleman had just joined them—and so they all were. "And so we shall meet again presently."

And Jim Lawlesse sauntered off after having bade the ladies an au revoir—in decidedly better spirits than when he had first met Sir Hedworth and the Misses Dare too.

"I don't think I should mind backing my luck against that of the Hon. Sam's," said Jim Lawlesse as he proceeded to dress. Miss Kate Dare had promised Mr. Lawlesse the first waltz.

The dance given by the Royal Victoria Yacht Club

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was unusually and brilliantly successful that year; so said everybody; and the ball is certainly one which, if for no other reasons than those of a spectacular nature, is well worth seeing. The elegant devices which convert a balcony into a corridor, the profusion of banners, the trophies of yachtsmen, the decidedly nautical features in the dresses of the ladies—all these add a charm which is exclusively their own to the affair.

Mr. James Lawlesse entered the room almost at the same time as the Dare party. On the arm of Sir Hedworth rested his elder daughter, and on that of the Hon. Sam, Miss Kate Dare. The baronet's tone was more chilled than ever when he caught sight of our hero approaching in the distance.

Amid an indescribable chatter strongly flavoured with marine jargon the first quadrille was danced. Mr. Moonington's partner was Miss Kate Dare, his *vis-à-vis* the gentleman whom we have for form's sake christened the hero of this slight narrative. But the first quadrille, as even first quadrilles are some time or other, was over at last, and within a very few minutes of its termination Mr. Lawles e claimed the younger of Sir Hedworth's two daughters as his partner in the first waltz; and Mr. Moonington surrendered the lady who without doubt was the object of his affection and ambitions, certainly not with the best grace in the world.

Miss Dare, however, was close by, and disengaged. Would Miss Dare give him, the Honourable Sam, the pleasure of that waltz? Most happy: and the pair whirled off.

The elder of Sir Hedworth's two daughters was far from displeased at the *contretemps*, and she determined to make the most of it. She did not see why the heir to the Moonshine peerage should be calmly appropriated for and by her younger and half-sister. For her part, she could never quite understand what there particularly was to charm people in Kate. Besides, Kate had her time before her; she had only finished her first season, and Edith Dare's first season was an affair of the more or less long past. If Kate did not choose to know her opportunity such a charge of ignorance should not be brought against Miss Dare. In plain truth this young lady was as little pleased with her father as with her sister in the present matter. It would be no such bad thing, she thought, if the event should prove that the calculations of the former were at fault; as for Kate, the child was far too ignorant to calculate at all.

The fair partner of Mr. Moonington put forth all her powers—and they were not inconsiderable—to captivate and please. She suggested a walk in the corridor, it was so hot in the ball-room. Curiously enough, Kate and Mr. Lawlesse had proceeded in the same direction only a few minutes previously. Curiously enough, also the keen eyes of Edith Dare had noticed the movement.

"I think," said that young lady, in a low tone, "we will sit here, just behind that pillar. The air blows in so cool, and we have such a pretty view of the sea."

Almost immediately on the other side of the pillar were Miss Kate Dare and Mr. Lawlesse.

"Ah! Mr. Moonington, there, I declare, are my sister and Mr. Lawlesse. How very sentimental!"

And Edith looked up into the face of the Honourable Sam, who, judging from his expression, was not particularly pleased. He looked in the direction indicated, and then turned again to his partner.

Under the shadow of the pillar Edith advanced with her cavalier a little nearer her sister.

"Romance, did you say, Mr. Lawlesse? I don't think there's much romance in the present century, least of all at Ryde. If you want romance I think it would be necessary to search for it on far wilder waters than those of the Solent."

"I suppose," returned Mr. Lawlesse, who had evidently been reading 'Ixion in Heaven,' "that romance is to the romantic."

"And who is romantic nowadays?"

The pair were standing close together, and Mr. Moonington and his partner could distinctly see Mr. Lawlesse's hand laid upon Kate Dare's.

"I think, Mr. Moonington, we will go inside. It is getting rather chilly here—romantic perhaps, rheumatic certainly," said Miss Dare, in accents sufficiently audible to arouse the attention of her sister and Mr. Lawlesse.

"Hadn't a notion," remarked Jim, turning round with something of confusion, "that anybody was so near."

The Hon. Samuel Moonington did not ask Miss Kate Dare to dance again that evening.

In her dreams that night, when the ball was over and the dancers dispersed, Miss Dare saw herself the Countess of Moonington; and if any thoughts visited her sister's slumber, I am disposed to fancy that they were principally relative to Jim Lawlesse.

* * * * *

A beautiful morning two or three days after the club ball; Ryde was thinning gradually, but among the visitors who remained, were Sir Hedworth Dare, his two daughters, the Hon. Sam Moonington, and Jim Lawlesse, the latter of whom still waited the return of his friend, the proprietor of the *Sea Fan*.

Sir Hedworth Dare was going to take a morning's sail in his yacht the *Petrel*, his two daughters were coming, and they were to be accompanied by Mr. Moonington. The baronet had noticed something of the events of the ball-night, and Mr. James Lawlesse was discreetly omitted from the party.

Kate Dare was passionately fond of the sea, and was herself an excellent oar. She told Jim as much the other night. She could not imagine, she said, any life more perfect than the yachtsman's and it must be allowed that the existence is not without its attractions.

Sir Hedworth's party were on board the *Petrel*, and the yacht was just about to slip her moorings.

"Where's Kate, Edith?" inquired the baronet, not seeing his younger daughter on deck.

"Oh, down in the cabin, papa, I suppose."

These last two words were added in a somewhat lower tone, and as she said them Edith rather blushed. She sat down, however, presently, next to Mr. Moonington, and was soon making the running not less than that of the good yacht *Petrel*.

"Tell Kate to come up," said Sir Hedworth, after he had leisure to think of other things than certain matters of purely nautical importance; and Edith Dare called for her sister down the companion ladder. Receiving no answer, she descended into the cabin.

"Papa," she said on returning, "I don't see Kate at all. I suppose at the last moment she made up her mind not to come."

This was not exactly the truth. Edith Dare had determined from the first that Kate should not be amongst the party, and to this end she had managed to divert her attention to something else at the moment they were leaving the house. Sir Hedworth was not

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satisfied with the explanation, and knit his brow. His younger daughter was his favourite, and not being blind to the character of the elder, he did, in plain truth, suspect something of the ruse that had been executed; but he said nothing, and the *Petrel* went on.

Some person else had selected the present morning as a favourable one for a sail, and that was Jim Lawlesse. He had taken no companion, and was talking abstractedly to the master of the *Sea Fan*. The regulation telescope was suspended from his neck, and something impelled him to look through it in the direction of what seemed a black speck. He examined it again.

"Looks uncommonly like a boat; and so far as I can make out, whoever is inside her is in distress, for it appears to me," said Jim, "as if they were making signs."

The master of the *Sea Fan* was of the same opinion, and the pair decided that they would "stand about," and try to get at the object.

"By Jove!" cried Jim, as they drew a little nearer, "it's a woman, I declare!"

And a woman it certainly was—evidently exhausted with the severity of her efforts to make headway against the waves. They were now within two or three hundred yards of the boat; and Jim ordered the yacht's pinnace to be let down, and said he would himself run up to this female Columbus.

"Miss Dare!" cried Jim, as the pinnace touched the boat, "is that you? What on earth brought you here—three miles from shore?"

"Oh! Mr. Lawlesse, I am so glad to see you, or someone. I was getting about exhausted, and thought ——"

But Kate Dare was unable to say more, for she fell back in a dead faint.

Jim Lawlesse transferred himself into her boat, and rowed to the yacht; and when Kate Dare next became sensible, she found herself lying in the ladies' cabin of the *Sea Fan*, with Mr. James Lawlesse at her side.

"How very kind!" were her first words; and "How very fortunate!"

"It was certainly very fortunate that I should have seen you; but there is no kindness," said Jim. "Don't speak till you have quite recovered."

The recovery was not long delayed; and Kate Dare commenced to tell Jim Lawlesse exactly what had occurred.

"You know," she said, "that we—that is, papa, and Edith, and Mr. Moonington—were to have gone out for a sail in the *Petrel* this morning. Well, I was dressing and thought I had plenty of time, when, on looking out of the window, I saw the yacht starting. I was determined not to be robbed of my cruise, so I hurried and went down to the water, and got into the little boat. You see, they were close to me. The *Petrel* didn't seem to be more than a hundred yards ahead, and I thought that I could easily attract their notice. Besides, I had imagined, naturally, that they would discover I was left behind; and I thought, most likely, they would put back for me. However, I couldn't manage it; and I rowed on and on; and when I looked back, the shore was ever so far behind, and I didn't know what to do; and I only hoped some person would pick me up—and at last you did; and I am really more obliged than I can say."

Jim blurted out some disclaimer, in reply, which does not materially affect the course of this narrative.

It was decided that the best plan would be to st er for home immediately, and to land as near Sea View as possible—where Sir Hedworth Dare's house was situated.

"People talk so absurdly in Ryde," added Miss Kate Dare, as an argument to clench the plan.

When the shore was reached there was scarcely a person visible; two persons, however, had noticed the disembarkation from the *Sea Fan*—one was Edith Dare, and another Mr. Moonington.

"If that does not convince him no'hing else will," thought Miss Dare.

Miss Dare's wish was accomplished, and before the house was reached the heir of Moonshine had declared himself.

"Where on earth is Kate?" said Sir Hedworth, as he met Mr. Moonington and his newly gained *fiancée*.

"We have just seen her, papa, landing from Mr. Lawlesse's yacht," was the sisterly reply.

"The dickens you have?" replied the baronet, under his breath.

"Ah, here they come, I declare," added Miss Dare. "Hope you've had a pleasant sail, Kate?"

"Kate?" said Sir Hedworth, as that young lady was bursting out into all manner of ejaculatory explanations, "I want to speak to you at once. I am surprised," said the baronet when the library was reached, "that you should have given me the slip in the dishonest manner you did simply to do a most improper thing—go out in the yacht of a young man to whom you know I exceedingly object. As for his conduct it is simply disgraceful. I don't understand it, upon my soul I——"

"Oh, papa! what do you mean?" burst in Kate. "Mr. Lawlesse has saved my life." And Kate narrated to her father all that had occurred. The baronet's face changed more than once in the course of his daughter's story.

"Go up and dress for dinner, Kate. I will go and thank Mr. Lawlesse."

Sir Hedworth met that gentleman standing on the steps of the porch.

"No thanks whatever are due, Sir Hedworth," replied Jim. "I am only sincerely grateful that I saw your daughter when I did."

"Don't go, Lawlesse," continued the owner of the *Petrel*. "Come and stay to dinner."

And so saying, Sir Hedworth turned aside to speak to his elder daughter whom he saw coming.

"Edith," he said, "I should like to know what you meant by telling me that Kate was in the cabin this morning?"

"Really, papa, I knew nothing to the contrary. I'm glad she was in more agreeable society. But Mr. Moonington is in the library and I know he is anxious to see you. He is calling—pray go!"

Later on that evening there was another interview—this time between Sir Hedworth and Mr. Jim Lawlesse, It was entirely satisfactory.

Kate had spoken to her father in the interval on the subject of her lover. Jim had made, and would make no declaration without Sir Hedworth's consent. That consent was given.

"Lawlesse, you have not only saved my daughter's life, you have acted in a manner infinitely creditable to yourself."

"Kate," said Jim to his affianced bride, before they parted that night, "don't you think I was right, that there may be some romance even close to Ryde, and on the waters of the Solent, after all?"

Susie Lance.

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# The Brain Gymnasium

IN these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, SHORT STORIES, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, October 1st, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

## No. 217.

MY whole is a fish; my 4, 5, 6, 7, is splendid; my 8, 9, 10, is an adjective; my 1, 3, 11, 2, is a disease.

## No. 218.

ONE quarter of tare, plus one-fifth of swear, plus one-sixth of bubble, plus one-fourth of gate, plus one-third of net, plus one-third of tea.

The sum is equivalent to: to diminish.

## No. 219.

MY initials and finals, read downwards, will give the names of two great powers:

A village in Norfolk.
A town in France.
A town in Germany.
A town in Russia.
A state in America.
A county in Wales.
A river in Scotland.

## No. 220.

MY FIRST a sound which may denote
Disoredit or surprise,
To kiss it, when on bended knee,
Humility implies.

From gold to silver LAST is changed
By alchemy of time;
To tamper with it when not yours
Is deemed a heinous crime.

Unjustly charged, unjustly doomed,
The sage took up my WHOLE;
"With this," said he, "I will unLAST
The mysteries of the soul."

## No. 221.

THE following letters, when re-arranged, will form a double word-square, the connecting word of which means a communication:

**AAAA EEEEE GG LLLL MM NN PP RR SSSSS UU Y.**

## No. 222.

A MAN left £400 to be divided among his eight children in the following proportions:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The first was to receive | as much as | the 2nd and 3rd, | | |
| The second | " " | twice as much as | the | 3rd. |
| The third | " " | " " | " | 5th. |
| The fourth | " " | " " | " | 6th. |
| The fifth | " " | one-sixth " | " | 1st. |
| The sixth | " " | twice " | " | 7th. |
| The seventh | " " | one-quarter " | " | 4th. |
| The eighth | " " | one-fifth " | " | 2nd, [6th, and 7th together. |

What did each child receive?

## RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

**Nos. 199 to 204.**

THE first prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. Charles H. Moore, of The Nest, Record Road, Emsworth, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "A Strange Executor," by Bennett Coll has been sent to each of the following:

W. Armstrong, Marchmont Road, Edinburgh.
S. S. Napper, Highbury New Park, N.
Miss K. Brien, Wilton Place, Dublin.
Mrs. Frances Thomas, Kingswood, Bristol.
C. G. Chesterman, Fairfield, Liverpool.
F. Lucas, Freemantle, Southampton.
A. Milligan, Lit le Woodhouse Street, Leeds.
A. E. Bunn, Thornham Street, Liverpool.
J. P. Gross, Rue des Belles Feuilles, Paris.
Mrs. J. L. Keys, Flaxman Road, Camberwell, S.E.

## SOLUTIONS OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM COMPETITION.

**Nos. 205 to 210.**

**No. 205.** 1½.

**No. 206.** Canton, Stirling, Port Arthur.

**No. 207.**

```
O B A N
B A N E
A N E W
N E W T O W N
      O B O E
      W O V E
      N E E D
```

**No. 208.** Bream, cream, cram, dram, ram.

**No. 209.** TARTAR.

**No. 210.** "Sweet are the uses of adversity."
Afraid, share, verity, toe.


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